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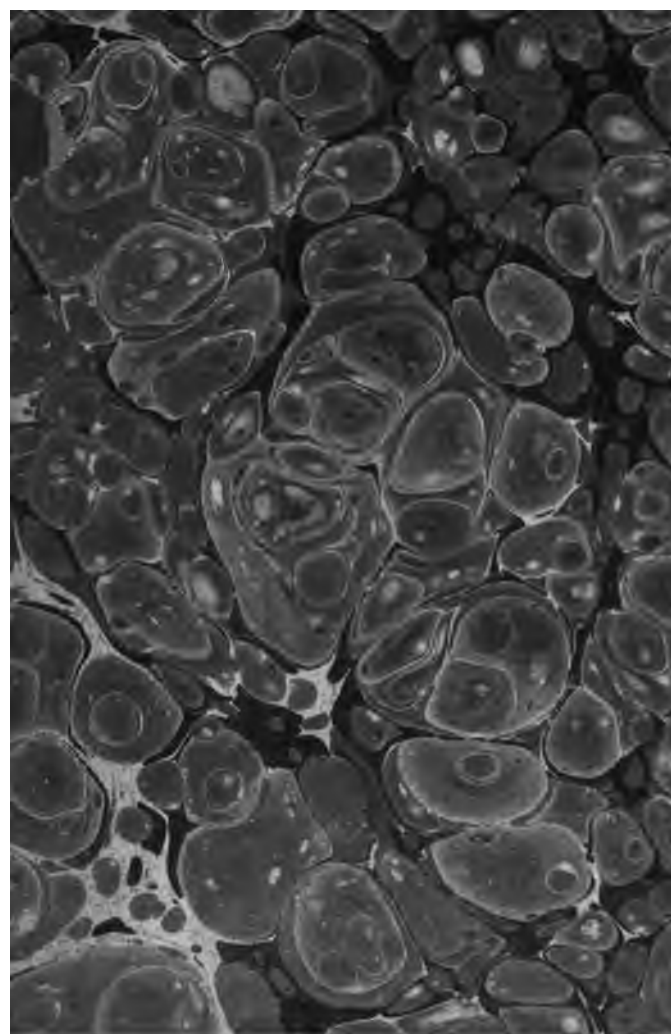
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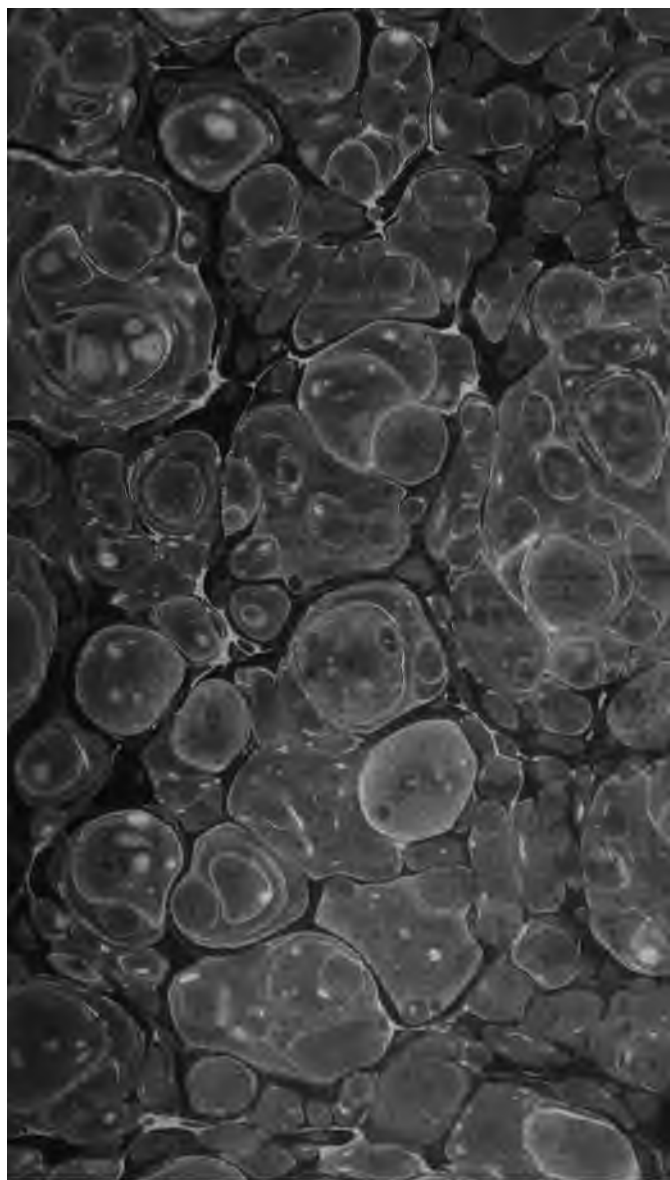
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RECIPROCAL DUTIES.

Published June 1, 1818, by Taylor & Hessey, 93 Fleet Street.

RECIPROCAL DUTIES

OF

PARENTS AND CHILDREN.

BY MRS. TAYLOR,

AUTHOR OF MATERNAL SOLICITUDE, PRACTICAL HINTS,

&c. &c. &c.

"Children, obey your parents in all things; for this is
well pleasing to the Lord.

"Fathers, provoke not your children to anger, lest they
be discouraged." *Col. iii, 20, 21.*

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR TAYLOR AND HESSEY,

93, FLEET STREET.

1818.



**T. MILLER, Printer,
8, Noble Street, Cheapside.**

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RECIPROCAL DUTIES

OF

PARENTS AND CHILDREN.

INTRODUCTORY CHAPTER.

BEHOLD that lovely cherub in the arms of its fond mother! It has been but a few months in existence, yet it has already learned to recognise its best friend: her faithful bosom is the receptacle of all its tiny sorrows and joys; its hopes are derived from her experienced kindness; its fears are allayed by her protecting care: on this well known being it depends, for all that can soothe and delight. The utmost ingenuity of the nurse, though aided by the delicious morsel, or the glittering toy, is

of little avail when *she* appears, in whom is concentrated every gratification of which its infant mind is susceptible. Soon, under her assiduous care, its bodily and mental powers begin to expand; its joys and its woes are more intelligibly expressed; it grows fertile in schemes and contrivances for its own amusement (as yet it dreams not of existing for any other purpose); in these the fond parent participates, and is consulted on all occasions without reserve. In the frolicsome gambol she renews her interest, and again enjoys the pleasures of infancy with a double zest.

“ She feels and owns an interest in their play,
Adopts each wish their wayward whims unfold,
And tells, at every call, the story ten times told.”

The companion in health, the watchful, assiduous, and anxious friend in sickness, the prime of a mother's days imperceptibly glides along, bearing away her personal graces, and not unfrequently leaving her constitution a wreck.

As infancy ripens into childhood, her duties alter, but her zeal continues una-

bated: she perseveres in accommodating her services to the growing necessities of her charge, till that important period arrives, when childhood emerges into youth, and a new epoch commences in the maternal feelings. Then, then it is, that the subjects of her solicitude begin to seek their gratifications from other sources; and in proportion to their success, are prone to forget whence they were once derived: confidence gradually declines; and that society which heretofore comprised all that was desirable, becomes, perhaps, irksome,—a burden and a restraint: so that the reserved and distant being we now contemplate, could scarcely be identified with the smiling cherub of former days.

The brute creatures, like the human species, attend their young progeny with anxious solicitude; and when their services are no longer necessary, the parent first breaks the tender tie, and chases them away to know them no more: but human ties can alone be dissolved by death; and whatever alienations ensue, they are not warranted by nature, or by nature's God. "Honour thy father and thy mother," is a command coeval

with the existence of our parents ; and should be as deeply engraven on the human heart, as once it was on the table of stone written by the finger of God. If, unhappily, these characters have been erased, the loudest professions of religion, or the strictest pretensions to moral rectitude, are as the sounding brass, and tinkling cymbal : it is vain for those to profess love to God and their neighbour, who are remiss in affectionate duty to the individuals whom He has placed in the intermediate space, and distinguished by the peculiar honour of assuming His character, who styles Himself the universal parent.

Filial attachment is not a virtue of difficult attainment ; indeed, it is not a quality to be acquired, but is inherent in our nature. It is not to be *planted*, but *cherished* ; and is distinguished beyond all other virtues by promises of temporal blessings : nevertheless, there are parents who have to take up the lamentation, and say, “ I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me.”

That the causes of such complaints may, in most instances, be traced to early indul-

gence, or to a want of judicious, enlightened management on the part of the parent, forms no reasonable excuse for the conduct of an undutiful child ; but let parents, who, in the bitterness of their hearts, lament the unkindness or unmanageableness of grown-up children, look back to a time to which their children's memories can scarcely extend ; to the period of their childhood and infancy, when the engaging pettishness was winked at, and the amusing rebellion was half encouraged ; or when, immersed in cares of very inferior importance, or in recreations which every *good* mother will cheerfully resign, the nursery was consigned to hirelings. Let them call up such recollections, (which, we are persuaded, the memories of most complaining parents might furnish) before they feel surprised at the result, or consider their present circumstances as unaccountable.

But, more especially, let those parents who are only commencing their task, who have yet the future peace and happiness of themselves, and of their children, in a great degree at their disposal, recollect, that there are *reciprocal* duties between parents and

children ; and that those of the former stand first, both in order and importance. Let the fond mother survey the lovely infant in her arms ; let the delighted father contemplate the rosy groupe around his kness, and reflect with feelings of deep and anxious responsibility, that the real welfare of these *darlings* depends, as the means, almost entirely upon themselves,—upon their affection taking at once the right direction. That fondness, indeed, which excites parents to injudicious indulgence, is pure selfishness ; that which impels them to restrain and educate them, alone deserves the name of parental love.

There is no view which a reflecting mind can take of this subject, but what is calculated to impress upon it an idea of its vast importance. There is no relation we may bear to society, which has not an imperious claim on those who are furnishing it with new members ; no period, however remote, which present tuition may not affect : and shall the rearing of a family be deemed a light matter ? shall its duties yield to every frivolity that solicits attention ?—Should not this rather be the language of parental solicitude ? “ I have

so many human beings—so many immortal creatures committed to my charge; I know the snares, temptations, and trials which have beset my own path; I anticipate similar ones in theirs: already they manifest their propensity to evil, their averseness to good: amid all their diversity of tempers and dispositions, I perceive one characteristic symptom of their corrupt original. O, thou God of the families of the earth! shall I ever give Thee reason to repent of having granted me children, as thou once didst of having created man, because of his evil imaginations? Who is sufficient for these things? Thou that givest wisdom to those who ask it, teach me to train up these children for Thy service here on earth, and for the enjoyment of Thee in the world above!"

For those who are thus earnest and sincere, there is abundant encouragement: they will not labour in vain, or spend their strength for nought; but will assuredly reap some fruits of their anxiety and toil, although, perhaps, not of the kind or degree which they had anticipated. Evil precepts

and examples have *their* reward; and may not judicious discipline, and pious instruction, anticipate some reward also?

Yet, it must be confessed, that the best instructions, although founded on genuine piety, sometimes fail, from want of sufficient skill to direct them. Parents cannot acquit themselves well in this arduous task, if they have not acquired the habit of reflecting, and observing if their minds are unfurnished, and their knowledge of men and things narrow and circumscribed. Such persons deem it sufficient to tell their children, that this is right, and that is wrong, without being able to discover the motives which actuate or to warn of the consequences likely to result. Is it any wonder, if, while children enjoy the present gratification of an evil action, they resolve to repeat it, in spite of admonitions which do not excite their interest, or attract their attention? in spite even of chastisements, for which they are not taught to see the necessity, or discern the full meaning?

Besides these fundamental duties, there are others which belong both to parents and

children, during the succeeding stages of life, and which extend to its latest period. To explain and enforce some of these subsequent obligations, is the more particular object of the following pages.

CHAP. II.

MUTUAL RESPECT.

X

"Cool age advances venerably wise,
Turns on all hands its deep discerning eyes,
Sees what befall, and what may yet befall,
Concludes for both, and best provides for all." **POPE.**

"Children's children are the crown of old men, and
the glory of children are their fathers." **PROV. xvii. 6.**

YOUNG persons who are naturally disposed to "rise up before the hoary head," will rarely be remiss in filial respect and obedience; but where this amiable sentiment of reverence for age does not exist, parents themselves are generally the first to feel the absence of it. Surely something beyond an internal expression of respect is intended by that divine injunction, something perhaps more honourable and advantageous to the giver than to

the receiver of such homage ; for if that precept, "lean not to thine own understanding," be generally addressed to all ages and conditions, how peculiarly does it apply to those who are destitute of experience, and all its advantages, and who might derive the greatest benefit from a respectful deference to the judgment of those who possess them !

Should any young reader be disposed, like Rehoboam, to give preference to the counsel of the young brought up with them, rather than to that of persons of superior years and experience, a similar result may be the consequence ; for it is worthy of remark, that Rehoboam was forty years old, and perhaps in his own estimation arrived at the zenith of mental capacity as well as of bodily strength : but sacred history unites with daily experience to evince the fallacy of such self-sufficiency, and to prove, that while the faculties remain unimpaired, there is no period of our existence in which we may not hope to make advances in wisdom and knowledge. I am convinced there are none of my young readers, who do not conceive *themselves* to have derived benefit from experience,

in proportion to their years, whatever the opinion of others may be concerning them; why then should they conclude that their parents have remained stationary in that respect? Is it not highly probable, that in the course of a much longer life they may have traversed some path which has been hitherto unexplored by their families, or may have stumbled against something which has not yet lain in their children's way?

The best proof that can be given of our having attained some degree of wisdom and discretion, is a modest deference to the opinions of those who, in the natural order of things, may reasonably claim it. The young and the ignorant are prone to be self-opiniated and impatient of control, simply because *they are young and ignorant, ignorant especially of themselves.*

The revolutions made by time in the manners and customs of society, are sometimes urged by young people in excuse for their non-conformity to the opinions or wills of their seniors, which they are apt to deem out of date, and inapplicable to the modes and habits

of the present day; but it is presumed there are no parents who require that the cut of their children's clothes should conform to the fashion of their own, when, years ago, they were beaus and belles, at the height of the *ton*; or who insist on constructing their chairs with backs as high or as low as those on which themselves could once repose at ease: but although coats and cloaks, and chairs and tables, assume new shapes with every passing year, there are things in which the revolutions of time make no change; "as face answereth to face in a glass, so does the heart of man to man" in all ages and circumstances. Parents and children can exist in no period in which the former may not with propriety caution the latter against pride, and vanity, and dissipation, however the modes of gratifying those vices may vary.

It is an erroneous notion which the young and thoughtless are apt to entertain, that advancing age is necessarily connected with mental imbecility.* In every stage of life

* "The soul's dark cottage, batter'd and decay'd,
Lets in new light through chinks that time has made."

we frequently observe minds of no ordinary character united with feeble and decrepit frames: it therefore cannot follow, that bodily vigour, and the powers of the understanding, must necessarily decline together. Of the Christian it is said, that “ while his outward man decays, his inward man is renewed day by day.” This, indeed, is effected by divine influence; yet there is nothing irrational in the idea, (and it is confirmed by experience) that the natural powers and faculties of the mind are equally capable of improvement. Where not obstructed by mental defect, and where they are assisted by opportunities for observation, they *will* improve, and if accompanied by rectitude of principle, will become of increasing value in the common conduct of life. It is well for those young persons who view the subject in this light, and avail themselves of such needful assistance,—attending with humble and unprejudiced minds to the admonitions of experienced age, to the wisdom of accumulated years, although the full value of such instructions may not appear till some future, perhaps distant, emergency. Perchance,

the story twice told, had even better be thrice repeated than not told at all : like many an insignificant being on whom we are apt to look with contempt, it may happen to render us some unexpected service in a time of need. "I remember my father used to observe," may be repeated with very different sensations from what were felt at the time the observation was made. "My son, hear thou then the instruction of thy father, and forsake not the law of thy mother ; for they shall be ornaments of grace about thy head, and chains of gold about thy neck."

But such influence will be most easily and effectually attained by parents aiming at that character and conduct, which ensures the *respect* of their children. "I will walk before mine house with a perfect heart," should be the humble resolution of every one who sustains this important relation. It should not suffice that the character ranks high abroad, while the family at home is constrained to hold very different sentiments respecting it : that applause is of little value which is not echoed by the domestic circle. Children have

an early perception of right and wrong, and will involuntarily learn to appreciate their parents according to their merits. The disrespectful conduct of children should always awaken an inquiry on the part of parents, with regard to the origin of the evil : perhaps it will appear after such an investigation, that they have few claims to regard beyond those of natural affection. In this case, an amendment of their own conduct is the first step towards reforming that of their children ; for he is incompetent to manage an unruly animal, who cannot maintain his own balance, and keep himself steady in his seat.

A ponderous task, indeed, they have, if they must begin to practise the first rudiments of mental discipline on themselves, at a period when their families have become ungovernable ; yet, even this is not a hopeless case : a sudden transition, indeed, cannot be expected ; the irritable will not become placid, the morose and sullen cheerful, the arbitrary and tyrannical mild and gentle in a day ; but if once there is a conviction of the necessity for improvement, and sufficient principle and

energy of mind to attempt it, much will be effected:—the character will rise almost imperceptibly; that self-respect will be induced, which stimulates to renewed efforts; and thus a lesson would be afforded by the striking example of a renovated character, much more effectual than any (however well intended) that can be suggested in these pages.

To those who question their strength, and are tempted to exclaim, “How can *I* recover the esteem of my family? Can *I* plant the lily and the rose in a soil so long overgrown with thorny weeds? Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots?” it must indeed be replied, “our sufficiency is only of God.” But this consideration affords the highest encouragement to make the effort, in *His* strength, who alone can render crooked places straight, and rough places plain: He has performed such wonders in every age, and he will continue his operations to the end of time. The Apostle Paul, after enumerating a melancholy catalogue of offenders, adds, “And such were some of you, but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified in the name of

the Lord Jesus, and by the spirit of our God." Where then is the strong hold which shall be impervious to the same almighty power? Parents, especially, have the most urgent motives for pleading earnestly at the throne of grace for this renovating change, which shall influence their natural tempers and dispositions, and shed an agreeable lustre over their whole deportment. How vast the responsibility, if on their own characters so greatly depend, as a means, the spiritual as well as the temporal interests of their offspring! When a principle of life is infused into the root, the branches may be expected to bud, and in due time to yield fruit. Let them resolve then, in divine strength, and say, "As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord."

The necessity for paying the strictest attention to our own characters, as the foundation on which family virtue must be built, will further appear, if we consider that in whatever department we employ the services of others, we require them to be competent to the task they undertake. We make strict inquiry even into the qualifications of our menial servants,

and either do not engage them, or dismiss them when engaged, if they are not expert and skilful at their proper business. Our dwellings, our furniture, our food and clothing, must be the work of hands skilled in their respective employments; especially our infants are entrusted with confidence to the care of a nurse, accustomed to the management of children; and when it becomes necessary to transfer them to other hands, tutors and governesses are expected to be proficient in whatever they undertake to teach. If so, what manner of persons ought parents themselves to be, who have, or ought to have, the superintendence of the whole,—on whom, by right and duty, it devolves to lay the foundation of the structure, to assist in raising it, and to place the top stone with their own hands? What manner of persons ought they to be, on whose conduct and example the future destinies of their posterity so essentially depend? As they desire the respect of their rising families, the momentous work before them should be the first object to engage the deep attention of every couple at the very commencement of their arduous duties. It is

not sufficient that the lady can make beautiful baby-linen, nor that the gentleman can pay charges; rather let them institute a rigid inquiry into their own tempers and qualifications, for executing the great and difficult, but honourable and "delightful task," of training young minds to knowledge and virtue. "Can we," let them ask, "love our children so much better than ourselves, as to sacrifice our humours, our prejudices, our vanity, our time, to their true interests? Let not the attention of the mother be absorbed in those petty externals, which may enable *her* children to vie with those of her neighbours, in dress and appearance, when they walk abroad with their nurse-maids; let not the father suppose he is fulfilling his whole duty, and entitling himself to the future respect of his family, while amassing property for those who, if they follow his example, will not know how to use it: but rather, by unremitting observation and care, let each party accumulate that appropriate stock of wisdom and experience, which alone can obtain the *respect* of their children, and will assuredly prove of more intrinsic value to them, than

any inheritance which they may be enabled to bequeath them.

Children, whose parents are truly qualified, are highly privileged indeed. Let them manifest a grateful sense of their advantages, by an affectionate and respectful deportment; let them "give honour to whom honour is so justly due." The value of a *good* education cannot be fully estimated by those who are receiving it, the benefit extends so far; it treasures up a stock of happiness, not only for the individuals themselves, but for others yet unborn. Yes, and the benefit of a good education is unlimited in its influence,—it extends to another state of existence.

Let not parents forget, that there is a *respect* due to the *young*, as well as to the old. It has a happy influence on the character when this is judiciously yielded: it will make an ingenuous spirit solicitous to deserve it, and impel to praise-worthy actions. Are they not deserving of it, if they have made advances in wisdom and knowledge proportionate to their years and opportunities? There is no crime in the inexperience of youth, provided it does not assume a consequence to which it

is not entitled ; nor should youth, or even inexperience, ever be mentioned in terms of contempt or reproach.

Were the above principles mutually acted upon, they would produce the happiest effects on domestic life : parents, worthy of respect, would more frequently be respected by their children ; while children, feeling a due return, would more often endeavour to deserve it. Nor would their juvenile attempts experience the difficulties which their parents must encounter, in the late and arduous work of self-renovation : their advantages are greater, their obstacles fewer, the motives are equally weighty to impel them, and they have the promise of the same divine assistance. As it is expressly by their conduct at home that the character of parents must be estimated, so it is of little consequence in what repute their children are held abroad, among their gay and thoughtless companions. The grand question is, have their *fathers* and their *mothers* just occasion to approve and *respect* them ? This is the best security for the permanent approbation of the wise and good. It is the dutiful and respectful child, whom we must select

for the kind neighbour, and the warm and disinterested friend. As our family finds us *within-doors*, so society will find us *without*, sooner or later, with whatever superficial gloss we may for the present conceal our real characters. What happy effects, in all the departments of life, may not be fairly anticipated, from the *mutual respect* of parents and children !

CHAP. III.

FAMILY HARMONY.

“Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!” PSALM cxxxiii. 1.

THERE are few readers, whether parents or children, who need the aid of what has been already suggested, to prove that domestic happiness is in itself a most desirable object; although it is not every one who is skilled in the most effectual means for attaining it. Our ears are not unfrequently assailed by the mutual complaints of parents and children: what discordant and unnatural sounds! Whence can they originate? Are the parties new acquaintances, who have yet to learn each other's tempers and dispositions? This, however strange it may seem, is sometimes the case with children who are consigned

from the care of the nurse to that of the governess. Is it any wonder, if, when a young lady of sixteen returns to an almost strange home, there should not commence the most cordial understanding between herself and her mother ; though with what view their mutual discontents should be made public, it is not easy to conjecture. Parents ! can you expose the foibles of your family, without exciting some suspicion of your own mismanagement ? Children ! can you undermine the reputation of your parents, without in a degree sapping your own ? *your father and your mother !* relatives, whose authority is protected by the divine sanction ; frail mortals like yourselves, entitled to have the mantle of love cast over them by the hands of filial affection, instead of being exposed to the condemnation or the ridicule of a censorious world.

It is often too apparent on what terms families live together, although they judiciously abstain from direct complaint or accusation, by the uncordial manner in which they speak to, or of each other, leaving us to conjecture, if we please, that things are in reality worse than they appear. If the good opinion

of society be of any value, this is not the direct method to obtain it. Neither party, as they value the family respectability, should address the other in the presence of by-standers but, at least, in terms of politeness and respect.

Those who are in perfect harmony at home, will most probably be so with their neighbours; as they carry no complaints abroad, they will seldom be annoyed by tales brought home to them of the misconduct of any of their happy groupe: should this ever occasionally happen, parents will hear with candour, and bear with patience, such communications, nor resent as a mortal injury a friendly hint, which, if properly received, might prove eventually advantageous; they will not be so weak as to imagine, that *their* children must of course appear faultless abroad, and be universally approved and admired. Such persons, however, are apt to make no scruple of doing that themselves, which they so highly resent in their neighbours.

The ill-conduct of children may sometimes be traced to the terms on which their parents

live together : nothing can operate more unfavourably on the disposition, than being accustomed to witness daily bickerings and altercations ; to say nothing of that open hostility which must, of course, be destructive of all that is amiable. Would parents who really love their children, and have their happiness at heart, give due weight to these considerations, it would suppress many a useless dispute, and conduce much to the tranquillity of the fire-side. If it be desirable to render the morning of life tranquil and serene, from the anticipation of mid-day storms, this would contribute greatly towards it. Fathers and mothers who would ensure the love and esteem of their children, must let it appear that they esteem and love each other. How little self-denial do those parents exercise, who cannot refrain from petty disputes and contradictions in the presence of their families, who consequently acquire the like wretched habits of discord among themselves. We can by no means be sure that children will follow a *good* example, but their imitating a *bad* one may be calculated upon almost with certainty. It is still worse to make them

parties in such affairs, however trivial they may be. Should a tormented husband or an oppressed wife need filial consolation, it must be remembered, that nothing short of a very judicious education can render the bosom of a child a fit receptacle for connubial grievances. A young person should be possessed of much prudence, and delicacy, and affection, to be confided with the failings of that being, whom he is bound by ties, human and divine, to love and honour. At all events, let the moral infirmities of *fathers* and *mothers*, when they cannot be concealed, be only called into requisition for the benefit of *sons* and *daughters*, against a time when they may assume those important relations themselves. A discreet and affectionate parent will endeavour to steer his family clear from the rocks on which his own vessel has foundered.

Children whose unhappy lot it is to witness domestic dissensions, are certainly in a difficult, as well as in an irksome situation; they can scarcely espouse the cause of one parent, without failing in proper respect to the other. Even in trifling disputes, there is

a delicacy to be observed which would well become them : they should either remain silent, or if obliged to advance an opinion, and take a part, it should be in such a way as can give no reasonable offence. An affectionate temper and conciliating manners, united with a little address, may sometimes extinguish a spark, which unheeded, neglected, or urged, might produce a serious conflagration. Debates which augur an unpleasant termination, might frequently be diverted by the adroit introduction of some subject foreign to the matter in hand. It is a happy circumstance, when young people have sufficient inclination and address, to do this without apparent design ; to change the subject on which they perceive their parents *cannot* agree, to one on which they are sure they *will*. “A word spoken in due season how good is it !” We hope it would be an unnecessary digression to address the *family incendiary* : should, however, such an eye glance at these pages, will not those engaging terms, filial love, connubial affection, domestic felicity, and all the soft and harmonious sounds which are so gratifying to the virtuous ear,

be totally unintelligible to it? totally unafflicting to one who has arrived at this advanced stage of domestic crime? *A family incendiary!* Should conscience accuse any of meriting such a harsh epithet, let them pause, at least for their own sakes, and consider the probable consequences of this conduct. Can we jar the pillars on which the building rests but at our own peril?—"A house divided against itself cannot stand;"—cannot stand to answer the desirable purposes of a domestic establishment: and those who attempt to divide it, must in some degree participate in its overthrow. "Where no wood is, the fire goeth out: so where there is no tale-bearer, the strife ceaseth."

O let not children mar the peace of one parent, and the character of the other, by any malevolent suggestions of theirs; rather should they stand in the breach, and endeavour to answer one of the purposes for which Providence designed them: rather let them be links in the chain, to bind those together whom God has joined, and who should be separated by no man, much less by their own offspring.

But let not afflicted parents seek consolation in vain in the filial bosom. Let them be *comforted*, not *irritated*; nor be obliged, for want of sympathy at home, to carry their grievances abroad, or to brood alone under their sorrows,—a species of suffering which the human mind can rarely sustain.

But to return to parents, to whom this part of the subject is more exclusively addressed; let it be observed, that the future prospects of that family are very unenviable who have lived in habitual discord: strangers to domestic peace, they will not be skilful in promoting it wherever they may go, nor be solicitous to plant a tree whose fruits they have never tasted. Probably it will not suffice them to have repaid the humours of their parents by obstinacy and rebellion, but they may retaliate the sufferings of their early days on the heads of children yet unborn; and their future families may reap the bitter fruits of those unhappy dissensions which now disgrace the domestic circle.

Perhaps your children will shortly quit the paternal roof, and enter on the busy scenes of life with principles and habits ill —

adapted to promote their own happiness or that of others ; in that case, the remaining opportunities are comparatively few in which they can derive benefit either from paternal precept or example : or should they remain at home, you must shortly quit it ; every passing year reiterates this warning, " set thine house in order " by aiming at that general excellence, which can only result from the religion of Jesus. True religion furnishes its possessors with arguments the most numerous, weighty, and solid, for the preservation of domestic peace. " Peace on earth, and good-will towards men," was one of the first messages promulgated by the Gospel. So far as its divine precepts gain access to the heart, they will be apparent in the life, and prove blessings to the house, as well as to the church ; for they are as essential to the private and individual Christian, as to the great body of which he is a member.

It is true, that conduct the most circumspect cannot always ensure domestic felicity : unerring Wisdom has warned us, that in the world we shall have tribulation ; but unchangeable Love has bid us be of good cheer

notwithstanding, because our divine leader has overcome the world. When we can take this comfort, it is that we prove the value of religion. Then we say, "Though my house be not so with God, yet hath he made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure; this is all my salvation, and all my desire." A Christian parent under the various trials peculiar to his relation, can yet say in the darkest hour, "What am I, and what is my house, that thou hast brought me hitherto?" That thou hast given me such consolations, and afforded me such hopes? For "thou hast spoken of thy servant for a great while to come;" and shall I expect also to find in this wilderness some unexplored path, decorated with perpetual verdure, and where neither briars nor thorns infest the ground? Shall showers of sorrows fall around me, and shall I, like Gideon's fleece, remain secure and dry? Have I maintained such an uninterrupted rectitude of conduct in all my relations, as to be authorised to expect no breach of duty should occur towards myself? Rather can I, "a living man, complain,—a man for the punishment of his sins?" O here is not

my rest!—it is polluted—I have helped to pollute it. “I am a pilgrim and a stranger, as all my fathers were. I travel towards a better country; and I will employ all the means with which, as a parent, Providence has invested me, to conduct my family into the same path,—to point them to the same goal.

CHAPTER IV.

SELF-WILL.

“ And in their self-will they digged down a wall.”

GENESIS, xlix. 6.

ALTHOUGH it is true that an enlightened system of education has done much, and it is hoped will do still more in restraining the violent and obvious actings of *self-will*; yet, experience, no less than revelation, proves the inefficiency of the most perfect system of human discipline, to *eradicate* any one of the diseases of our depraved nature. Besides, improvements of any kind make slow progress among the middling classes of society; because, only the well-informed and intelligent are capable of estimating their value. A few remarks on the subject may not therefore be inapplicable.

There is no passion of the human mind which manifests itself earlier, or which it requires more skill or firmness to control, than *self-will*. We have to encounter it in our children from their infancy; but there are many parents who do not perceive the necessity of opposing these early indications of it till it is too late: and those young persons, who are now experiencing in their own ungoverned tempers the sad effects of such mistaken tenderness, will, it is hoped, suffer the word of exhortation.

If the young feel it so very irksome to submit to the will of those who have a natural right to control them, how repugnant must it be to the feelings of parents to have the order of things reversed, and to live in subjection to their children! Do young people intend that their love of sway should *decrease* with their years? Do they indeed propose, when they become parents themselves, to relinquish quietly the reins of government into younger hands, and thus, in turn, submit to subjection? This, surely, is by no means their present intention, whatever may be the result: they may, however, at some future

time, be qualified from their own experience, to form a just estimate of the sacrifices they now exact. Does the seat of government seem so very easy, that children are impatient to occupy it?—Are those who covet the privilege, willing to pay the price? Would they with the power, endure the burdens, groan under the anxieties, partake the shattered constitutions, the increasing infirmities of their parents? It is hardly fair to desire one without the other. Were these malcontents left to themselves, they imagine they could transform their present home into a delectable paradise; but this is not permitted them, and it is well for others, and especially for *themselves*, that it is not. The superior knowledge and capacity of children to their parents should certainly be first ascertained, ere such arbitrary and unnatural reverses are attempted. They should be able to prove undeniably, that at the age of sixteen, or twenty, while their contemporaries have been amused with the trifles of childhood, the frivolities of youth, or at most have been but preparing themselves for the approaching duties of life; they have made so rapid a pro-

gress in the knowledge of men and things, as to qualify them for the general superintendence of affairs, and to warrant them in placing their *Fathers* and their *Mothers* in the back ground, and rendering them ciphers in their own houses! They must have been greatly at a loss before their children became wise enough thus to direct them!

But the good sense of the reader will revolt at these suppositions; while, should there be any, who from mere thoughtlessness, may in some degree have authorised them, they will modestly retire into their proper places, and there abide until the time arrives, when nature and Providence shall summon them to more arduous duties.

We never appear to advantage but when we act in character, when we cheerfully conform to the situation in which we are placed. That modesty, humility, and diffidence are peculiarly appropriate to the young, the general suffrages of mankind sufficiently testify. These virtues ensure love and approbation wherever they are found; while obstinacy and positiveness, and that spirit of contradiction which is their almost inseparable com-

panion, produce corresponding effects, and keep such unhappy tempers in a state of perpetual warfare with all around. A tenaciousness of opinion, the result of a vain self-complacency, is an unequivocal symptom of ignorance. Genuine wisdom, founded on experience, is seldom positive: with a true dignity, it leaves the self-conceited to the enjoyment of opinions which, indeed, are rarely worth contending for.

There is not a greater, nor a more unhappy mistake, than that of imagining we are sent into the world to *have our own way*: our humours, and passions, and propensities must be thwarted in the very nature of things, in a world where there is such a diversity of tempers, and so much clashing of interests. No sooner does the human being begin to discern objects, than it grasps and cries to possess all it beholds; but some it would destroy, some would prove destructive to itself, and some are the property of others, with whose rights it is as yet unacquainted: as it increases in knowledge, the objects are changed, but the propensity remains; and it is well when parental discipline co-operates with an over-rul-

ing Providence, to curb those exorbitant desires; well, especially, when the subject is enabled to discern the hand from whence, and the reason why he is crossed in his pursuits; he will then become patient, submissive, and thoughtful: but when, regardless of such wholesome discipline, the mind revolts from instruction, and when self-gratification continues to be the primary object, mortification and chagrin await it at every turn. He has commenced a warfare with his fellow-creatures, in which he must eventually be vanquished. God and man unite to thwart his unwarrantable, and to frustrate his vain hopes.

But there are errors in the temper and conduct, which, while they assume a less formidable aspect than ungoverned *self-will*, have, perhaps, as great a tendency to destroy domestic happiness. *Peevishness* and discontent are faults, which many an indulgent (too indulgent) parent has to lament, who cannot, perhaps, complain of open rebellion in his children; but might not such ungracious tempers be more frequently counteracted, if young persons would but consider that the

sun which is *rising* on their own hemisphere, is *setting* in that of their parents? Is it not desirable that the *evening* of their days, at least, should be tranquil and serene? After enduring the heat and burden of the day, nature requires repose; and if the grasshopper be a burden, a dutiful child will assiduously chase it away. There are those who at the hazard of their lives would rescue their parents from the fire, or the water, or from any other imminent danger which might threaten; who yet, when it is but a straw that incommodes them, will not give themselves the trouble to remove it! But that filial attachment which never manifests itself but upon such urgent occasions, is of a doubtful nature, and will not, it is to be feared, bear investigation.

Children who are conscious of irregularities in their own temper, may well make some allowance for those of their parents, who have at present so much more to try them; they ought also to take heed, lest what they feel to be so troublesome and oppressive in the conduct of others, should attach to their own. Indeed the best, and almost the only

use we can make of observing the faults of our fellow-creatures, is to guard against the same in ourselves.

Children were originally intended by an indulgent Providence as *blessings*; accordingly they are styled "an heritage of the Lord," and bestowed as one of the most precious of temporal gifts: but those who by their untoward conduct prove thorns in the sides of their parents, cruelly pervert these gracious designs, and manifest a spirit of impiety truly offensive to God. There is an indefinite carriage and conduct in some young persons towards their parents, which, although not decidedly hostile, is sufficient to deter a by-stander from coveting *such* an heritage. Something rather in the *manner* than the *matter* which marks their usual communications with them, as though they were addressing beings, not merely of different ages and circumstances, but of a different species from themselves, with whom they could have no sympathetic feelings whatever; while they intrench themselves in expressions which, if repeated, would appear, perhaps, perfectly unexceptionable, and afford no plausible reason for complaint.

Parental love, however, is not easily shaken ; it remains proof against great irregularities of temper, and will often endure all that youthful caprice and thoughtlessness so ungratefully or so carelessly inflict : but woe to the child, whose irritating conduct occasions the continual displeasure excited in the parental bosom to settle into a fixed disapprobation ! A parent may thereby inflict what is remote from his heart, and entail an involuntary *curse* upon one, on whose head every blessing would be still implored. *A parent's blessing ! A parent's curse !* Did children duly consider how prophetic these frequently prove, and that what is thus uttered on earth, may by a just and retributive Providence be ratified in heaven, and become an immutable decree, they would not think lightly of either.

But *self-will*, and the various bad passions and evil propensities which originate in that fruitful source, are not, alas ! always confined to the younger branches of a family. Let not parents then who possess so many advantages from their age and experience, from the knowledge they ought to have of themselves,

as well as of others, for detecting and resisting their faults, be remiss and negligent with their own characters in this respect : the faults of maturity are more harsh and offensive, as well as more inexcusable, than those of youth. *Self-will* in a parent is *tyranny* : the obedience it exacts from the family is not that of *sons*, but of slaves. Some persons under the idea of maintaining parental authority, which they deem the grand art of education, assume the character rather of the master than of the father : human nature is equally prone to love power, and to abuse it ; those who are intrusted with it, should be constantly aware of this tendency. Let fathers and mothers often recur to their own youthful days, with all the desires, aversions, propensities, and levities which characterised them. Such recollections might go far towards rendering their requisitions reasonable and considerate. With them, these youthful ebullitions have subsided, and perhaps the revolution in their manners and feelings is as much the result of care and sorrow as of years. They have reason then to anticipate the same impressive lessons for their children ; for “ man is born to trouble.”

A considerate father, therefore, when he surveys the wilderness in which he has been long travelling, and sees his children just commencing their journey through it, will be solicitous to strew a few flowers over a path which may decrease in verdure at every step.

It would be well for both parents and children, if the following anecdote had the charm of novelty to recommend it; but although similar occurrences are within every one's recollection, so as perhaps to render the relation uninteresting, and certainly commonplace; yet it is not every one who has made a judicious application of such events to their own circumstances.

The two Miss W.'s were the only children of their fond parents, who so far from checking or discouraging the early indications of *self-will* which they manifested, were exceedingly amused by them, and thought, that in *their* children, at least, they were peculiarly engaging; constantly palliating any action which required a decided apology, by saying "they would know better by and by." They were deemed too young to be controlled, till control was unavailing; till what had hereto-

fore been very interesting, became very troublesome ; and would have been insupportable but for the prospect of complete renovation under boarding-school discipline. The parents imagined (as many do) that there the whole process of education commences and terminates ; and while the management of two individuals in whom they were so deeply interested was deemed by themselves impracticable, they formed the most sanguine expectations from the efforts of one who had twenty or thirty under her superintendence ! Vain hopes ! as if the right formation of the human mind could be effected by a mechanical process ! as if education were like the military evolutions of the field ! as if virtue and intelligence might be brought into action at the word of command ! The flattering aspect of the line, so compact and trim ; the pointed steel and gaudy feather, motionless through all the ranks, till animated by a word, or the note of a bugle, must by no means be taken as any indication of the orderly dispositions and regular manners of the individuals who make up the show. With as little certainty can we conclude, from the external order produced

in seminaries, that the mind and heart are trained in them to virtue and goodness.

Parents who have imagined that schools could do every thing, have afterwards, from their own bitter experience, as hastily concluded that they could do nothing. Such at least was the opinion of poor Mr. and Mrs. W. when after years of unlimited expense, their *finished* daughters returned home, having as they imagined, learned every thing—of course, there was nothing more to learn : as they were no longer children, but young women, they were competent to govern themselves, and by a very slight advance of authority, they conceived that they were qualified to govern their parents also. Under such circumstances, the situation in which *they* now found themselves may be well conceived : they lost all authority in their own house, and were really under greater subjection than any of their servants. The consoling hope of their children's " knowing better by and by " had been long discarded ; that prospect, at least, appeared too distant to afford much encouragement. Nor did the terms on which the young ladies lived with each other, contribute

at all to *family harmony*. "I wish," said Mrs. W. to her husband, "that Charlotte and Sarah were well married." "I wish so to," replied he, "if *well* married." "It was a pity they had not continued longer at school," observed she. "I don't see how that would have answered any good purpose," said he; "they were ruined before they went; but wishes are vain now." "I don't know," said she, "what we could have done better, they always had such high spirits, as to be quite unmanageable." "And yet," said he, "some people have the art of managing such spirits, but it was never our *forte*." Mrs. W. sighed, and the conversation ended.

The former part of the wish, however, was shortly realized: the young ladies received the overtures of two lovers nearly at the same time, which, as they neither of them met with the approbation of either father or mother, would have been rejected had their opinion been consulted: but parents who were not allowed to arrange the affairs of their own household, could have little influence in the choice of their daughter's husbands; so they made a virtue of necessity, by

giving a reluctant consent ; and solaced themselves in the prospect of their own emancipation from the daily vexations under which they groaned, which was all of comfort that appeared to remain. These, however, were fallacious hopes : the eldest daughter having married a *kindred soul*, was soon embroiled with her husband, and again assailed the peace of her still fond parents with her domestic quarrels ;—while the husband of the younger having squandered all her dowry (though, to do him justice, she had her full share in the dissipation of it), left her with three children in indigence ; with these, who inherited no small portion of their mother's spirit, she sought an asylum in her father's house. With an income materially decreased by the misfortunes and imprudence of their children, they had now in the decline of life an increase of family, with all the multiplied vexations arising from ungovernable tempers and perverse dispositions. Adversity had rendered their daughter *irritable*, but not humble ; while their own spirits were broken by the accumulation of family disasters.

The father's afternoon naps were generally

interrupted by the noise and clamour of three unmanageable children, whom their mother would not endure to have controlled, and who had rather that her father should be disturbed than that her children should cry. From these troubles Mrs. W. was soon released: her enfeebled frame sunk under the effects of accumulated vexation and fatigue. With what sensations she left her aged husband to the care of such a family may be easily conceived.

Let those who would avoid similar calamities, be solicitous to detect first in themselves, and then in their children, the earliest indication of *self-will*.

CHAPTER IV.

ON SOME MISTAKES IN EDUCATION, AND THE CORRECTION OF THEM.

“ Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.”

THAT a great proportion of the ill conduct which destroys the peace of families originates in *mistakes in education*, there can be little doubt; it may not, therefore, be amiss, before we proceed upon other subjects, to point out a few of them; for to enumerate the whole would occupy too large a portion of these pages.

Not to direct our first assault against that principle of *selfishness* to which in many families such costly sacrifices are made, would be like lopping the branches of a noxious tree,

and leaving the root in the ground; some parents do not discern, that in proportion as this principle is cherished, they are producing consequences directly opposite to their designs. It has never occurred to them with any salutary conviction (although their own experience might have enforced the lesson), that the majority of mankind has adopted each for himself this identical idol,—dearer, more interesting to the individual, than was “great Diana of the Ephesians” to her worshippers.—Ah! no wonder then there are such clamours without doors and within!”—No wonder if the voice of any one in particular, however vociferous, be lost in the general din, “*great is myself;*” “*to my honour, my pleasure, my caprice, shall be sacrificed the feelings and the interests of all around me!*”—Until, however, this domineering principle is subdued, the human character cannot be contemplated with complacency; nor till we are brought to comply with the divine precepts of the Gospel, which direct us to esteem others above ourselves, can we experience true peace of mind and inward tranquillity. How would such holy principles, early im-

planted in the young mind, sap the foundation of all those moral evils which torment and harrass mankind! To which of them would they not prove destructive, an appropriate, an efficient cure?

With what an egregious mistake are those parents chargeable, who foster in their children the spirit of party, of bigotry, and of intolerance! *Their* notions, *their* party, *their* sect (as if the world and their own depraved nature did not furnish them with materials enough) must be put in requisition to complete the character, and stamp it altogether unamiable. How disgusting to hear a little bigot, or party-man, prating about who he is *for*, and who he is against; although he knows not why, or wherefore! Yet this intolerant spirit has sometimes found its way into public seminaries, and occasioned the most disgraceful divisions. Is this the method parents take to promote their children's happiness, or the public weal? Do they forget that God is love, and that his express command is, that we love one another? It is not from such discordant materials as these that the true citizen, the true patriot, and what is still more, the true

Christian, can be formed. He is actuated by principles of universal philanthropy : the divine precepts of the Gospel, which are the rule of his conduct, are in direct opposition to such a temper. " Not," as Dr. Watts observes, " that it is at all amiss in parents to train up their children in their own forms of worship, at least so far as any of their peculiar opinions enter into their forms of public religion." It is hardly possible to avoid this, for religion cannot be practised but it must be in some particular mode ; therefore children must be educated in some forms, and opinions, and modes of worship ; and it is the duty of parents to educate them in those ways which they think nearest the truth, and most pleasing to God. But all that I mean here is this, that as I would not have these particulars of different sects to enter into the public practice of religion further than is needful ; so it should be far the greatest care and solicitude of parents to teach their children christianity itself, rather than the particular and distinguishing tenets of sects and parties.

But the errors of this unthinking class of parents are innumerable ; when they have by

erroneous principles planted, or by neglect suffered, and by every species of pampering and indulgence firmly rooted and nourished the *selfish* principle in their children during infancy and childhood, it is no uncommon case when (as a natural consequence) they begin themselves to reap the bitter fruits of it, for them to attempt to rectify one mistake by another equally mischievous, by substituting ill-timed severity for excessive indulgence. We have sometimes observed with grief how the fawning tones of these injudicious parents have in a few years degenerated into the harsh sounds of perpetual chiding, or unreasonable peevishness. Is it a wonder if the unhappy subjects of such unprincipled discipline should pursue any road but the right, when they have no skilful hand to guide them into it, but are driven about at random, just according to the impulse of the present moment?

Parents are frequently disposed to magnify the natural sagacity and acuteness of their children; they are forward to discover indications of superior genius or talent in them: their wonderful remarks and achievements

are deemed worthy to be exhibited and repeated before all companies! Should it not previously be ascertained, that the same things repeated or done by their neighbour's children would appear equally interesting and extraordinary?—It is granted, however, that some allowance should be made to a fond parent on this subject; and every fond parent is qualified to make it, and to sympathize in such feelings under proper restrictions; but we would still add a caution against extremes, lest what is so interesting to parents, should appear ridiculous, or become irksome to friends. Children should seldom be required to repeat by rote before company, unless indeed it be some pious hymn or song to their minister, or to a christian friend who may be supposed to take an interest in their improvement. Such customs are apt to generate conceit and confidence in children, while they afford little gratification to their hearers. People, in general, much prefer uttering their own extempore effusions, to sitting mute while a school-boy spouts forth a long poem by rote. It certainly adds nothing to his credit in the estimation of the intelligent part of

his audience; for he must be an incorrigible dunce, indeed, who cannot acquire such an art as this. Although we have seen a doating grandmother, who, if the expression of her countenance might be trusted, plainly indicated that she attached all the merit of Gray's Elegy to the lad who was repeating it!

Much less when a child displays such unequivocal talents as surrounding friends are constrained to admit, and willing to admire, should he be brought forward for public exhibition: nothing can be more inimical to the sterling worth of his character.—It is well if such a child does not become insufferably pert and disagreeable; well, indeed, if those unpleasant qualities do not in time degenerate into what is worse. We have seen a child of this description introduced to a numerous company, with a confident look and air ill becoming his age. Secure of admiration, he was under no restraint; while even his nonsense was applauded, as something extraordinary. “O parents! parents!” thought some who were present, “it will be well if one day you do not dearly pay for your vanity.”

“ Well, but *my* child,” says many a fond parent, “ *is* unquestionably clever.”— Indeed!—Then you see your work before you; it is cut out ready to your hand; although the framing and putting it together may prove a more difficult task than you are aware of: should you perform it negligently or unskilfully, it were better that your labour had been bestowed on more homely materials. A genius neglected or mismanaged is ever to be deplored.—A rich soil unfruitful or overgrown with weeds, must reflect disgrace and bring misfortune on the husbandman. Double your diligence then, otherwise those talents which were originally dispensed as blessings, will ultimately prove the very reverse, to society, to yourselves, and to the being on whom they are bestowed.

On the other hand, if there be evil in the conduct from too great partiality or indulgence, there may be also in injudicious restraint and violent coercion: there are parents who do not distinguish between *curbing* the spirits of children and *breaking* them; who do not consider that the subjects of this process are in danger of degenerating either into

meanness and imbecility of character, or into low cunning and hypocrisy, equally unfriendly to the right performance of duty. Considerate parents will proportion their expressions of disapprobation to youthful levities, or more deeply-rooted faults.

It is true their wisdom and patience are sometimes put to severe proof by the variety of tempers they have to encounter, the discipline for one being, perhaps, quite opposite to that which is suitable for another: they are constrained in a sense to adopt the apostle's conduct, who was willing to become all things to all men for the general good.—A *mild* system is, however, always to be preferred, if possible: yet it must be *firm*; not a firmness resulting from obstinacy or caprice, but from sound principle, and mature judgment. The young reader then will excuse it, when it is repeated that it should be *firm*. That parents must bear rule in their own houses, should be as extensively published as the decree of Ahasuerus, and remain as irrevocable as the laws of the Medes and Persians. Let those who feel inclined to relax their discipline, or to submit for the sake of present quiet to the

obstinacy or clamour of their children, younger or elder, be admonished not to yield what is right, just, and prudent—no, not for an hour: that hour's peace may be purchased with years of anarchy and sorrow. Their mental powers and their just authority in their own houses should only expire together.

Yet it should be conceded, that although it is the duty as well as the right of parents to rule and direct their children, and to order their own concerns in all essential matters, there are subjects on which the young may be better informed than themselves, cases in which they may be allowed, in a certain sense, to dictate to their parents, who may listen to their suggestions without at all endangering parental authority, or derogating from the wisdom of age. They have, in some instances, more general intercourse with the world than their parents now have, and, probably, they feel a more lively interest in what passes there: this may produce a quicker discernment on various subjects of minor importance, which may be as well conceded to them. There is no virtue in wearing the habit, speaking the language, or persevering in the

customs of fifty years ago. The period of half a century does not necessarily render things worse, as some elderly persons are apt to assert, any more than that it must universally improve them, as the young so pertinaciously maintain.

And now, while some young readers may be disposed to take advantage of the preceding remarks, and complain of their scanty privileges, others, not feeling things quite as they ought to be with themselves, may be willing enough to lay all the blame on their parents, to charge the whole on their bad management, and to say, "Had I been differently educated, I should have proved a better character; but the habits I have contracted are now become so firmly rooted, as to be, I fear, beyond my power of control." This may be too true; but I beseech you make the same allowance for your parents, who had, probably, equal disadvantages to deplore: nay, it may be fairly presumed, that they were still greater; for the system of education is so much improved since their early days, that it is probable even your opportunities have been superior to theirs. Per-

haps they have acquitted themselves to you to the best of their knowledge and ability : they might even, while sowing the seeds of some of those faults in your temper, of which you cannot but be conscious, imagine that they were actually educating you well. If when you behaved amiss, they threatened to send you to bed, or to school ; if they shut you in the dark, or called the old man, or the harmless cat or dog, to frighten you ; or if your good conduct was rewarded with cakes or sugar-plums, fine hats or frocks, thereby so enslaving you to sensual gratifications and groundless fears, as to produce much present misery, and threaten still more to yourself and others ; yet your happiness was the grand end they aimed at in all they did, although they miserably mistook the means. Gratitude for their zeal, though mistaken, is a debt you should ever acknowledge.

But should the conviction of former errors at length force itself upon them, should they endeavour to rectify their former mistakes by more judicious discipline in future, will you submit to it *now* ? Will you endure to be told of your faults, and suffer reproof

without resentment and impatience? Will you bear denial of any of your accustomed gratifications, or apply yourself to the performance of any difficult or painful duty which is repugnant to your feelings, or contrary to your present habits? Will you begin to be tractable and humble, co-operating with them in endeavouring to rectify past errors? It is not too late to do this; not too late to make the attempt, even without their assistance. Your increasing years and opening prospects, whatever they may be, call most forcibly for such renovating energies, otherwise your own family, should Providence decree you to have one, will be in the very predicament which you now deplore. Commence your operations then ere the cares and anxieties of life assail you, that you may be the more effectually qualified to encounter them. There is much to *undo*, as well as *do*; your leisure days are, perhaps, nearly expired: employ them not in unavailing, and indeed unbecoming complaints against the conduct of those who may possibly have done their best by you; but in endeavouring to amend your own, especially if you are convinced that you have

not in all respects done the best by yourself, or acted according to the knowledge you possessed.

If the *selfish* principle has been instilled into you, by whatever means, against that, as was before observed, the first assault must be directed: however you may have been admired and extolled by your parents or by others, or whatever confidence or self-satisfaction you may have felt, if you will but take the trouble to investigate your own character with impartiality, with the secret motions and actings of your own heart, you will find enough to humble you, and to level your self-complacency with the dust. If this is a work, my young friend, to which you have been hitherto unaccustomed, and the process is utterly strange to you, bring your *whole self* to the standard of Scripture, your most secret thoughts, as well as your words and actions: this is the only way to produce that genuine humility which must be the basis of all other virtues—which is the only foundation of the christian character. Remember, that he only who humbleth himself shall be exalted: and this is true in a moral as well

as in a scriptural sense; for it is not those who are so desirous of the uppermost seats, who find their neighbours equally ready to give place to them. The principle of humility in its universal extent, while it places you at the feet of those of your fellow-creatures who are qualified to instruct, will also conduct you to the foot of the cross as one destitute and helpless, weak and ignorant. This it is to be a *Christian*; and when you are a *Christian*, and not before, we may reasonably expect you to acquit yourself well in all the relations of life.

CHAP. V.

PECUNIARY AFFAIRS.

"It is the fate of almost every passion, when it has passed the bounds which nature prescribes, to counteract its own purposes."

RAMBLER.

THERE is no subject which produces more frequent altercations in families than pecuniary affairs : a tendency to parsimony on one side, and to prodigality on the other, cannot but occasion disputes between parents and children. A love of profusion either evidences much inexperience, or it proves that even experience has failed to produce its proper effect. They who are incessantly draining their parents of money to defray superfluous expenses, have not yet considered how easily property is dissipated by imperceptible degrees : they have not been in the habit of calculating for the future, and have no thought beyond present gratification. It is

the attribute of prudence to "foresee the evil, while the simple pass on and are punished." To be indifferent to our future prospects, is folly; to sacrifice the interests of near relatives to personal gratification, is selfish and cruel: while children, perhaps, have no apprehension that they are doing so, their parents may have well-grounded fears on the subject, quite sufficient to account for their remonstrances and their resistance.

That an expensive style of dress is one of the principal drains of property among our own sex, needs not to be proved: much is it to the disgrace of the matronly character, that mothers are frequently no less eager than their daughters to gratify this idle passion: and what is ultimately gained by indulging it? In what higher estimation do *dressy* women stand with the wise and good, with those whose opinions are of value? Taste may harmonise the colours and adjust the drapery, and symmetry of form may display the whole to advantage, while the mind does not perhaps at all correspond with the external appearance: there may exist neither symmetry nor harmony there,—its scanty

furniture too plainly indicating that it has occupied by far the least proportion of attention. While the outside show might gain admittance into the gayest circles, the mind may have been so far neglected as to be utterly unfit for the society of the cultivated, the polite, and the better informed of either sex; and still less qualified to find resources in itself in the hours of solitude and retirement, in the absence of a vain and alluring world.

Of such characters it might be justly inquired, "Wherefore will ye spend your money for that which is not bread, and your labour for that which satisfieth not?" What rational mind but must deplore the accumulated mischiefs of this fatal propensity? Shall it not be for a lamentation? In numberless instances it has prevented its fair victims from attaining those useful acquirements which their extravagance has rendered doubly necessary in future life. Nor can this be a solitary passion; it brings up many similar evils in its train, all equally inimical to sterling excellence of character and to happiness; for upon such persons Providence does not eventually

smile : of trivial and unworthy objects, pursued to excess, their votaries will one day have to exclaim, " All is vanity and vexation of spirit." Even in present gratifications of this nature there is much alloy—a worm nibbling at the root of the very choicest of them : and it will be well if every sigh fetched from the bosom of a parent by unreasonable exactions, be not repaid by a briny tear, wrung either from painful recollections, or from the pressure of present misfortunes.

It is hoped, however, that to many young readers such remonstrances are not applicable ; or that where there exists an inclination to unnecessary expense, a reasonable expostulation will be sufficient to restrain it. Let every one aim at a wise medium. The very few persons who pass the other extreme, and become careless of external appearances, betray an equal error of judgment : a decent conformity to our circumstances, and to the society with which we rank, is neither unreasonable nor dangerous.

It must, however, be acknowledged that children are not always chargeable with the whole blame of domestic disputes even on

this subject; some of them have to endure severe trials, from the unreasonable parsimony of their parents: and where this is the case, it has a hopeless aspect, because covetousness is a vice rarely indeed extirpated in advanced life. An appeal to the reason, to the feelings, or even to the experience of the money-loving is fruitless.

The discord produced among the nearest relatives by the love of money, proves it to be indeed "the root of all evil."

"Gold begets in brothers hate,
Gold in families debate."

Many whose feelings would revolt at those heathen parents who used to sacrifice their offspring to idols, makesome advances towards the crime they condemn, when their fondness for gold impels them to sacrifice to it the happiness of those dependent on them: for "covetousness is idolatry." To withhold the means of enjoying those advantages in society which belong to their circumstances and their age, is unjust and cruel. Let it be repeated—the morning of life should be held sacred by parents, as well as the evening of it

by their children. To youth many things are very requisite, which to forgetful age may not appear so. To ascertain what are the just claims of others upon us, it is always requisite to imagine ourselves in their circumstances, and they in ours. It is only by so doing that the golden rule of duty to our neighbour can be applied : what a surprising change would take place in some families, if this simple process were suddenly to commence ! But this is an effort of abstraction, which to persons who are stiffened in their prejudices, and frozen in their *selfishness*, appears utterly unreasonable : accordingly, to do to others as we would *not* that they should do unto us, is no very uncommon practical rendering of that passage.

Those who imagine that a system of parsimony is the only foundation on which to rear the prosperity of their families, are, as is the case with most errors, insuring an effect directly contrary to their aim ; for they could not devise a more effectual means of disposing them to extravagance and prodigality. There are not wanting instances in the recollection of many to prove, that where property has been needlessly hoarded, it has been as need-

lessly dissipated when it came into the hands of children from whom it had been so withheld. It is not the nature of the human mind to take a favourable direction under oppressive discipline of any kind ; injustice exasperates it : to whatever extreme it passes, it will be alike remote from virtue and from happiness. The worst of parents would not willingly foster in the minds of his children the unnatural wish for his own death ; yet how inevitably does a system of rigour and tyranny, and meanness, tend to render the idea of emancipation (by whatever means) at least very supportable ! “ When my father dies, we’ll set the parish bells a-ringing,” said a young man to his brother. “ Not with my money,” replied the old gentleman, who unfortunately happened to be within hearing ! And he was as good as his word. Such filial sentiments are the reward, the *just* reward of oppression ; yet the oppressor, the *hard* man is frequently so unreasonable, so ignorant of human nature, as to be surprised that he is not beloved by his family, and to complain of their ingratitude and deficiency in respect and esteem !

But the errors of parents are perhaps more frequent on the opposite extreme: by indulging their families in extravagant demands, they engender evils equally great; so is wealth perverted in various ways! A moderate portion of it is in itself a *good*, if corrupt passions did not convert it into an evil. "Take away the *dross* from the silver, and there shall come forth a vessel for the refiner."

The prayer which requested neither poverty nor riches, was founded on a just estimate of human nature: and those parents who are capable of making it, will early habituate their children to a *moderation* in their desires, as well as to frugality in their expenditure. There is no rank or circumstances in life which can render a liberal economy unnecessary.

CHAP. VI.

RISING RANK IN LIFE.

“ With my staff I passed over this Jordan, and now I am become two bands. GENESIS, xxxii. 10.

It sometimes happens that a worthy couple in humble life are rewarded for years of industry and prudence, by unexpected success in their affairs: from indigence and obscurity, they rise perhaps to comfort and affluence: but as no temporal good exists without alloy, they feel (if they are people of sense) that the want of cultivation and good-breeding, from which their former habits of life debarred them, prevents their sustaining that place in society which they might otherwise have taken, but to which money alone cannot entitle any one. With laudable ambition they resolve that their children shall not labour under similar disadvantages; they bestow on them what is commonly termed an *education*,

and expect in due time to be amply rewarded for the cost and solicitude in their general improvement—especially by a return of grateful affection. The governess and masters having performed their part, deliver up their accomplished charge; who return home to delight their admiring parents, and astonish surrounding friends.

And now with their children's assistance they rapidly climb the eminence which had hitherto appeared inaccessible: of the blessings of society they enjoy as much, and perhaps more, than their hearts could wish; but of the imperfection attending all sublunary things they have another impressive lesson; for while they now find themselves recognised abroad, they are scarcely noticed at home: here they are viewed, rather as incumbrances, than as promoters of the general happiness. Their inveterate habits and prejudices exercise all the patience and skill of their more enlightened children, who sometimes give up the case as hopeless, and content themselves with keeping their rustic parents as much as possible in the background, treating them at best with that shy-

ness and indifference due to interlopers, and troublesome impediments to the completion of their high-flown schemes.

If this description be not totally imaginary, if the circumstances and conduct of any young readers should answer to it, a moment's reflection might convince them that these things ought not to be so. To whom are such children indebted for the advantages on which they so highly value themselves, but to those very parents whom they might have resembled in all their rude habits and vulgar prejudices, but for their superintending care? Such persons have never experienced (and it is hoped their subsequent conduct may never oblige them to experience) the anxieties, hardships, and toil, to which their parents were exposed in early life. Every comfort their children enjoy may have been purchased by a privation; every luxury by a laborious effort; every hour of cheerfulness and hilarity in the society of their equally thoughtless companions, by days of unremitting toil and restless nights of care. And are they thus rewarded?—Are the equipments with which they have so liberally furnished their

children for their entrance into life, to be converted into hostile instruments, and plunged as poniards into those hearts, round every fibre of which their children's happiness has been entwined? Unfortunately for such characters, that book which says, "Despise not thy mother when she is old," has made no exception for cases of this nature: the command is positive and unqualified, whatever disproportion may exist between the mental faculties or attainments of parents and children.

It is the error of vulgar minds to entertain false notions respecting *gentility*. In families like these there is frequently a radical mistake on the subject. It is a quality which, if genuine, must have its foundation in principle and moral rectitude. The skilful analyzer of character may sometimes discern the *principle* in uneducated parents, while not a particle of it appears to exist in their more accomplished children. There may be true superiority of *character*, where there is none of *manner*; therefore, before children harbour sentiments or adopt conduct to the disadvantage of their parents in this respect,

they should be well assured, from a general acquaintance with human nature, and an accurate knowledge of their individual characters, that they are as destitute of one as of the other.

Parents, however, who are conscious of a deficiency in their manners arising from such causes, should endeavour, for the general credit and respectability of their families, to conform themselves to their rising circumstances; till they have in some degree effected this, their work is incomplete. Their residence and their accommodations of every kind being on a higher scale,—having thrown off the humble garb of former days to wear the mantle of affluence, it is desirable that their carriage and conduct should harmonize as far as possible with these external appendages. This will be thought difficult—and so indeed it is; for it is not so easy a thing to lay aside a vulgar habit, as to throw off a shabby cloke: but although no exertions in after-life can supply the place of a liberal education, and although much refinement of mind and manner cannot be expected, yet it is not a hopeless task to aim at some

exterior improvement, nor to endeavour to acquire some enlargement of views, and liberality of sentiment. Those who have achieved so much by their own strenuous exertions, have surely not so exhausted their energies, as to be incapable of making an additional effort to render the whole complete. If such persons cannot *themselves* see beyond the surface, let them be assured there are those who *can*, whose penetrating eye will quickly discern *vulgarity* stamp'd in legible characters, if not on all they *have*, at least on all they *do* and *say*. Children are certainly to be commiserated, whose parents will obstinately persist in exposing their families to ridicule by habits and manners, which a little trouble and attention might, in some degree at least, polish and refine.

Persons who have been accustomed to menial occupations in early life, and to the low manners and contracted notions which these are apt to produce, are more likely to be confirmed in them, than to rise above them as old age advances, without strenuous resolutions and endeavours to the contrary. When other advantages are on the wane, it is espe-

cially desirable for persons in every station, not only to cultivate an intrinsic respectability of character, but also that pleasingness of manner which should result from it, and which is no despicable substitute for the fascinations of youth, or the substantial powers of mature age.

Let us reverse the subject.—“The race is not invariably to the swift nor the battle to the strong.” Neither the advantages of fortune, nor the most vigilant efforts of human care and industry, can ward off the stroke of adversity, when inflicted by Him who has all events at His disposal. “Except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain who build it. Except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain.”—It happens not unfrequently, that after parents have past the prime of their days in circumstances of affluence, lavishing on their families all those indulgences to which their fond hearts have prompted them, that they experience a sad reverse in their declining years, and are reduced to a state of indigence or dependance. Should the circumstances of their children be more prosperous, *now* is the

season to put the genuineness of their affection, as well as the rectitude of their principles to the proof. There was a time when the helpless state of infancy called forth all the tender exertions of those who were bound by nature to cherish and protect it; the circumstances of the parties are now reversed, but the obligation remains unchanged. Can it be necessary to make an appeal to the justice or to the gratitude of any individual, whose most attached, disinterested, and persevering friend—in one comprehensive word, whose *parent*—now in turn claims succour and protection? Must we *plead* for such a one? Many have been reduced to circumstances of dependance on their children, by having with a short-sighted fondness gratified their every wish in former times, and yielded to all their unreasonable demands. But is it for these children to inflict the punishment? Should *they* repay their parents' past indulgence with present ingratitude?—Parents whose earthly wishes were bounded by the future prosperity of their families, although they were unhappily deficient in the most effectual means of securing it. Is *this* the time to rouse them from

their pleasing dreams? And shall the objects of their fondest attachment undertake the task? When the infirmities of nature begin to assail them; when surrounding objects which were heretofore accustomed to delight, lose their fascinations; when every step they advance towards the confines of these mortal shores becomes more rugged and difficult; it ill suffices to be presented with a staff to pursue the remaining journey—with something just to prevent the tottering frame from sinking.—Nature now requires the gentle arm to support, the soothing voice of kindness to cheer, the warm mantle of filial love to protect from the chilling blast: but a bare sustenance dispensed as a charitable boon to a stranger, rather than as the voluntary offering of filial and well-earned affection, is hard fare indeed.

Are there any who anticipate the time with secret complacency, when they shall be relieved even from such services as these?—Well, be not impatient, time is doing his office: he keeps a steady pace with your parents, and with yourselves too—the weeks, and months, and years, are taking their flight as rapidly, one would think, as a mortal could

wish. Soon, very soon, although it may seem long to you,—that tottering frame which now bears so heavily on you, will need no further support, but will crumble into dust, and “the worm shall feed sweetly on it.” And can you anticipate this with satisfaction?—The time was, when if your infant frame had thus sunk even before you had rendered one service, or afforded any reward but your smiles, that the hearts of your parents would have been torn with the keenest anguish. You were conducted by them through all the common perils of your infancy and childhood with anxious solicitude, and the most assiduous care; they congratulated themselves to see their labours crowned with success, at whatever expense. Now they have thus far completed their task, and brought you to maturity. “Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth, and walk in the sight of thine eyes,” although the desire of their eyes should extort many a briny tear from them; “but know, that for all these things God shall bring thee into judgment!”

If those who harden their hearts against

the poor and the needy, and turn away their eyes from the fatherless and the *stranger*, incur the divine displeasure, in how much greater degree do they offend, who, regardless of nature's ties, and of the strongest of all human obligations, withhold from a necessitous parent what it is in their power to afford, whether in the way of sustenance, or in those tender offices which are equally acceptable, and far more endearing, and which all, whether rich or poor, imperiously need under the infirmities of age, or the decays of nature! Or, if they are dealt out with a niggardly hand, mistaking that for duty done, which is destitute of its most essential quality—*filial affection*!

The possibility of such a requital should operate as an additional motive with parents to instil sterling principles into their children; and by every possible means to cherish that tenderness of heart, that general benevolence, which embraces all within its sphere, and each according to its specific claim; then, and then only, are parents secure. But should Providence see fit to render them dependant on their offspring, however imperious are

their claims, they certainly should be careful not to urge them too rigidly, especially when their children have rising families of their own, and their pecuniary resources are circumscribed : in that case, the weight of a parent's support, however cheerfully borne, may become exceedingly oppressive, and the truly considerate will bear no heavier than circumstances absolutely require. There have been parents who, because it best suited their own immediate interests, have held their children in celibacy, and selfishly prevented them from forming connexions which might have proved the happiness of their lives. It would be much more to their credit, and perhaps to their real advantage, to let things take their natural course, and trust Providence with the issue. Those who do evil that good may come, must eventually be disappointed.

CHAPTER VII.

PARENTAL AND FILIAL CONDUCT, AS IT RELATES TO THE SEXES.

“That our sons may be as plants grown up in their youth; that our daughters may be as corner stones, polished after the similitude of a palace.”

PSALM cxliv. 12.

FILIAL duties, generally speaking, are of universal application; but there are some, which as they relate exclusively to sex, may be worthy of distinct consideration.

The sons in most families are transferred from the nursery to the school, and from thence to the practice of some business or profession, and can have comparatively but little intercourse with their mothers; it is, therefore, to those who remain stationary beneath the paternal roof that the following

hints are chiefly applicable; they may, however, be found sufficiently general to affect, in some degree, the conduct of sons whether at home or abroad.

It is no equivocal symptom of amiableness of disposition, when two individuals, totally opposite in their occupations, habits, and pursuits, dwell together in unity: when a mother and her sons do so, it redounds greatly to the credit of both: but this is not universally the case, even where there is no deficiency of natural affection, no unkind intention on either side. The evil frequently originates in that thoughtlessness, which seems to be a marked characteristic of the male sex in early life. With some gentlemen indeed it is requisite, that a lady should be *young*, to entitle her to any consideration; although to witness their manner to a *female*, an *aged female*, and that female their *mother*, excites a doubt of their entertaining any genuine respect for the sex. Certainly she is in no very enviable situation, whose lot it is to dwell under the roof with such high-flown spirits. They deem her pursuits trivial and unimportant; although to such, perhaps, they are indebted for life and

health, and for many of the comforts they now enjoy, but know not how to appreciate. Is it then a trivial pursuit to rear a family?—to bring up valuable members of society, such as, probably, they deem themselves to be! Their very self-importance might raise her in their esteem, as being the instrument, although an humble one, of so much good to the world. Let every young woman, however, beware of him who manifests such sentiments by his conduct; for he who is remiss in one relation, will generally prove so in another. Where good principle exists, its influence is not partial. The most satisfactory pledge for her own happiness that a young woman can desire, is the respectful conduct of a son to his mother. Such as he is under the parental roof, such in all probability he will prove under his own. His dignity as a man, as well as a Christian, is not impaired but enhanced by the minutest attentions to an aged parent. King Solomon in all his glory never appeared to greater advantage than in the polite reception he gave to his mother, when she appeared before him with the request of Adonijah. But to the honour of the sex, and of human

nature, we have no occasion to recur to the records of antiquity for bright examples of filial duty; such instances, we hope, are familiar to the majority of our readers. It is true, as they pass under their observation they will be appreciated by them according to their own particular sentiments and dispositions. There are some, perhaps, who would have scoffed at the conduct of two young men of sense and intelligence, whose aged mother was busily employed in executing a piece of needle-work equally void of taste and utility. So far from ridiculing or slighting her performance, as it beguiled the tedious hours of an infirm parent, they appeared to take a lively interest in it; and thereby afforded an instance of that endearing *sympathy*, which is so universally requisite in all our intercourse with others, but which is yet so sparingly exercised, although one of the sweetest ingredients in the cup of domestic life. Such characters stand well opposed to those whose prevailing system is *tormenting*; who from commencing their operations with their *mothers*, proceed with their experiments on their sisters, their younger brothers, the

servants, and of course all the unfortunate animals within doors and without, who may chance to come in their way. In such feats there may certainly be much *wit*, and *prowess*, and *spirit*; but manly feeling, and true dignity, and proper spirit, display themselves very differently; and, on every account, the sooner they are acquired the better.

It were to be wished that some sons, for their own sakes, would pay a little more respect to their mother's feelings, in what relates to their general health; that they would not altogether reject her services, either in preserving or recovering it. This is a matron's appropriate province: in all common cases, a prudent mother may safely be confided in, (for a *prudent* mother will not interfere with what is beyond her reach). A sensible woman, independently of the general advantages of experience, of observation, and perhaps of reading, must be furnished with additional skill in the management of her own family, from her more intimate knowledge of their constitutions. Some who have not been sufficiently aware of this, have paid dearly for their incredulity.

But an address to *daughters*, in reference to their mothers, appears still more appropriate from the intimate and frequently protracted connexion which subsists between them. *They* especially should be solicitous to discharge the duties of that relation in which others may one day stand to themselves; and although the inequality of years must certainly produce some essential difference in their feelings and pursuits, yet there are points in which they as naturally correspond.

The happiness of a mother is *essentially* at the mercy of the female branches of her family; and her condition is to be commiserated, if in the prospect of succeeding years spent under the same roof with them, when her health and spirits are on the wane, they manifest no inclination to promote her comfort. *External* attentions will not suffice to discharge the duties of this intimate relation. The services of one who is not her mother's *confidential friend*, are of little comparative value; while that bosom which is the receptacle of every maternal care and sorrow, thereby becomes the repository of such a

knowledge of the world, as may be of essential service when her own turn comes to encounter it.

It is truly revolting to a feeling mind, to behold a *mother* and a *daughter*—those dear relations—if not actually at variance, evidently not on terms of intimacy and confidence. If the former be respectable and affectionate, it is a phenomenon for which it is difficult to account, except from some radical error in the education.

A judicious mother will adapt her conduct, as well to the sexes, as to the dispositions of her children. Those who do not receive the same degree of attention from their sons as from their daughters, should make every allowance which the nature of things admits, and should not be too hasty in attributing to want of affection what may be the mere effect of thoughtlessness, united with different pursuits and avocations.

She who through an excess of maternal anxiety would shield her son from every wind that blows, is placing herself in the predicament of a hen with a duckling brood, who will follow the dictates of their nature, and

sail away, rejecting her care, and regardless of her call. To those who might submit to it, such superabundant care would prove highly injurious both to body and mind, and must expose them to the ridicule of their associates. One of the most essential services which a mother can render to her resident sons, is by every prudent means to instil into them a taste and relish for domestic life. The rational and satisfactory pleasures of a cheerful and happy home, will render them more cautious than they might otherwise be in the choice of their connexions,—better aware of what qualities are most requisite in fire-side companions, as well as more affectionate in their subsequent conduct towards them. Let their esteem for the sex be founded on the character of their *mother*, than which nothing can more effectually contribute to their individual respectability.

That familiar aphorism of Scripture, that “those who would have friends must shew themselves friendly,” is in no instance more forcibly exemplified than in the intercourse between parents and children. She who would find a confidential friend in her

daughter, must previously set the example. Let that solace and security which during infancy she experienced in the maternal bosom, increase with her years. A morose and distant carriage is as inimical to filial confidence, as a trifling levity of manner, which forfeits all title to it. Where it does exist (as was before hinted,) it affords special opportunities for general instruction, and for conveying useful knowledge. Every new circumstance supplies matter for judicious observation, warning, or counsel. It is not so much by prosing lessons that young persons are essentially benefitted, as by appropriate hints resulting from the occasion, and skilfully applied according to the disposition and circumstances of the pupil; but it is obvious that the most entire cordiality is necessary to give opportunity for, or poignant effect to, such lessons.

It cannot be too frequently repeated, that one essential part of domestic education consists in rendering home agreeable; not, indeed, by those frivolities which the ignorant select for that purpose, but by those rational pleasures which are calculated to expand the mind, and give a right bias to the taste and

feelings : even the remote effects of this are incalculable. To adopt the sentiments of a recent publication.* “Let each individual have to look back with tender remembrance on the hours, the places, and the associates, where the world first dawned on his mental energies. In the journey of life he seems to draw a lengthened chain, from this innocent, this lovely region, to which the aged mind ever reverts with pleasure and complacency. The recollection of the playful sports of childhood solaces the imagination and the memory, in the evening of life, as if man, like a plant, were physically attached to the spot on which he blossomed.”

Domestic felicity in early life restrains the passion for dissipation, and may prevent the forming improper connexions, which sometimes originate in the mere desire of quitting the paternal roof, and seeking that happiness from foreign sources which is not to be found at home. Early comfort diffuses an air of pleasing serenity over the whole deportment, and frequently renders the happy subject of it

* Boyne on the Human Species.

proof against that *irritableness*, which the subsequent cares and sorrows of life are apt to engender.

The daughter who loves her home will take a lively interest in all its concerns, and be solicitous to promote the happiness of the little circle of which she forms a part; especially if her mother is able and willing to instruct and assist her. If she be desirous that her daughter should rank with herself in domestic qualifications, she will not, either by a false tenderness, or a criminal negligence, suffer her to remain ignorant of such things as her future station in life may require her to be acquainted with: this would not only render her helpless and ridiculous, in a situation the most responsible, but would be treating with the greatest ingratitude the man who lays his fortune and his future happiness and respectability at her daughter's feet. There are not wanting those, who have groaned under the effects of such maternal negligence for many years of married life.

Next in importance to religious instruction, is that general knowledge, that mental cultivation, which is to be obtained (and only

to be obtained) by habits of *reading*, and which must assuredly rank amongst the most indispensable qualifications of a female; not only to render her a suitable companion for an intelligent partner, but as it is eminently calculated to enable her to fulfil every duty of her station. We are aware that this assertion would surprise many mothers among the middling classes, who being destitute of these advantages themselves, ignorantly conclude that such pursuits must be inimical to domestic proficiency. It is granted, that in common with any other desirable object, they may be suffered to engross an undue share of time and attention: but the possibility of abusing a thing is no argument against it; and we are well persuaded that there is far less danger of this being the case with regard to mental improvement, than with some other things at which these same persons are not always so ready to take the alarm; frivolities, (which, if not encouraged in their daughters, are but too seldom *discouraged* by the mothers to whom we allude) are far more frequently found to interfere with, and to give a distaste to, the more important domestic

concerns, than a love of reading. So far from estranging a woman from the discharge of her appropriate duties, the direct tendency of knowledge, and of that enlarged view of things which it affords, is to shew her what they are, to convince her of their propriety and importance, and to qualify her to fulfil them in a rational and systematic manner : hence it is that the *kitchen*, no less than the *parlour* and the *nursery*, partake the happy effects of the superintendence of an *intelligent* mistress.

It is true that instances might be produced of women, who, although they have not enjoyed the advantages of mental cultivation, are yet seen to perform the duties of their station with singular propriety and address, and to whom the honourable titles of *good* wives and mothers justly belong ; for good sense, united with sound principle, will go far towards qualifying a person for any station. In such cases, the intelligent observer is ready to exclaim, " What women would these have been, with minds well stored and cultivated by reading !" But notwithstanding these instances, a very slight observation is

sufficient to show, that the majority of uninformed women suffer greatly in themselves and in their families from the deficiency. Their houses, indeed, may be neat and orderly; their dinners may be well served; and such mothers may so far possess the gift of management, as to scold, or bribe, or drill their progeny into something like order and obedience; but we must not expect to see these persons act upon system, nor can the permanent effects of a rational system follow; that system, which especially makes it the grand interest, and happiness, and amusement, of the intelligent mother to educate her children. She leaves her pleasures when she leaves her home, and returns to it as from a banishment.

The duties, of whatever description, which emanate from a mind enlightened and expanded by knowledge, will maintain an evident superiority over such as result from mere habit, or even from an uninformed sense of duty; for a narrow mode of thinking and acting is the inseparable companion of ignorance. Will she who has acquired some general knowledge of the world in which she

lives, conduct the affairs of her own province with less skill than she whose ideas are circumscribed to the narrow spot on which she vegetates, incapable of extending them beyond the visible objects around her? Will not she who has taken even a transient survey of men and things in distant ages and countries, be better qualified to encounter her own personal emergencies and vicissitudes, than she who has no other guide to direct her than the impulse of the moment, or the customs and notions prevalent among her neighbours, who are probably no better informed than herself? The contemplation of virtue and of vice, of wisdom and of folly, as exhibited in characters public or private, which history and biography display, stimulate to worthy actions; while a moderate acquaintance with works of taste, would prove of what human intellect is capable, and awaken a salutary admiration of things that are truly excellent, instead of its being wasted on the trifles that amuse vulgar minds.

A cultivated taste, independant of present gratification, is one of the most valuable of human resources under the trials and daily



vexations of life: it is even a useful handmaid to religion, although some narrow-minded people may feel offended at the assertion.—Offended, because they never availed themselves of her services. Especially is it an antidote against that insipidity of character—that trifling insignificance, which tends to bring our sex into disesteem and contempt; which incapacitates them from sustaining a part in rational or instructive conversation, and which renders old age worse than uninteresting.

Would those who have the superintendence of youth, endeavour to give them a just estimate of the *advantages* resulting from those things they attempt to teach, instead of enforcing them as tasks, their labours would more frequently be crowned with success, and the most scrupulous mother might banish all apprehensions as to the *domestic habits* of a daughter so instructed. If a young woman has once been rendered domestic upon *principle*, there is little reason to fear, that when pursuits of a more elevated nature solicit a portion of her attention, they should destroy those habits which are so congenial to the

female character, and which form, as it were, a part of her nature. The mind that is trained to an accurate estimate of the importance of objects, will duly apportion the time requisite to the pursuit of each. This is a most essential lesson in education, and should be sedulously instilled by parental *example* as well as by precept. It should enforce this important truth, that even duty is no longer such than while it occupies its appropriate time and place. The moment that one duty encroaches on another, it degenerates into a fault.

Let mothers then, we repeat, who are so jealous of the time which is devoted to objects which themselves are not qualified to appreciate, take especial care that it be not squandered on pursuits still more inimical to domestic proficiency; on that species of expensive show and dissipation by which it is so often suffered to glide away, producing effects directly contrary to individual or social advantage. Were a sense of the high importance and value of time carefully impressed upon the young mind in early life, neither reading, nor any less worthy pursuit, would

be suffered to encroach upon other useful and necessary occupations.

Let it be remembered, that it will not suffice to qualify daughters exclusively for wedlock. It is the lot, or the choice, of some to remain single; and a judicious mother will endeavour to prepare them also for a life of celibacy, and to furnish them with resources for solitary hours. She will not accustom them to think the marriage state essential to happiness, or that alone for which all their acquirements are intended to prepare them. They are sometimes called to services of a different nature, and it is honourable that these should be cheerfully and zealously performed. The all wise Disposer has something for every one to do, the single as well as the married; and in times like the present, when individual activity is so much required, persons who are unencumbered by domestic concerns, are especially called upon to go and work in God's vineyard; nor are they in numberless honourable instances called upon in vain. There never was a period since the apostolic days when that assertion was more strikingly exemplified, "that she who is unmarried

careth for the things of the Lord, how she may serve the Lord." Let it then be the endeavour of parents to make their daughters *good women*; and thus, whether married or single, they will prove ornaments and blessings to society.

CHAPTER VIII.

PARTIALITY.

“ Bless me, even me also, O my Father !”

GENESIS, xxvii. 34.

THAT children of the same family, who stand in an equal relation, should not equally share in the affections of their parents, is a lamentable instance of the perversity of human nature. When these prejudices are entertained during infancy, before the subjects of them can have done either good or harm, they must be the effect of caprice, and are a species of injustice which admits of no defence. Our Creator, our fellow-creatures, and the lower orders of creation, unite to condemn it. Well will it be if those who indulge it should ultimately join in the general censure, and with sentiments of that deep

contrition which would well become them, return to their proper feelings, and restore their injured offspring to their natural rights.

That child is in a worse than orphan condition who, dwelling under the parental roof, has not a due share in a parent's affection : especially if, during infancy and childhood, when nature points it to its natural guardians and protectors, it is repelled by coldness or unkindness ; it is but too probable, that when the best and earliest affections of the heart are thus turned out of their proper channel, they may take a wrong direction, and become the source of much misery to their connections. Those who feel the slightest inclination thus to pervert the laws of nature, would be wise in resisting it in its early stages, and expelling the impulse from their bosoms, as they would the most noxious reptile which should attempt to harbour there. Such a prejudice is replete with all the evils with which a family can be visited. Jealousy, hatred, discord, with the calamities naturally engendered by them, are in its train. The consequences are frequently as injurious to the rest of the family, as to the unhappy ob-

ject against whom the prejudice exists. Fraternal affection is one of the earliest lessons to be instilled into the young mind by the natural guardians of family peace; but if they arm brother against brother by their own unjust and partial conduct, who can answer for the consequences?

But this is a case which less frequently occurs, and, however, gloomy its aspect, is less injurious in its effects than the opposite error of *favouritism*. Woe to the child who is detached from the rest of his family by the distinguishing affection of his parents! It requires more disinterestedness and self-command than falls to the lot of human nature in general, and of youth in particular, to sustain a rectitude and amiableness of character under circumstances so trying to both. Ill judging parents, while thus distinguishing the objects of their supreme affection, are, probably, in the same proportion, accumulating for them more disappointments and sorrows than might otherwise fall to their share: the consequences of excess of indulgence, and of that idea of self-importance which the *favourite* naturally conceives. The

world into which they are preparing to enter will not be partial; they will be no favourites there beyond their just deserts. Society is now waiting, with all its various instruments of discipline, to effect that which ought to have been accomplished under the paternal roof: well will it be for the pupil if this discipline at last prove salutary.

It is acknowledged that families often manifest a great inequality in the natural amiableness of their tempers, and the pleasingness of their manners. But although the character of some children cannot be contemplated with the same delight as that of others, their persons should be regarded with equal affection; the love of benevolence may be powerful, where the love of complacency is but faint: when this is the case, the extra discipline required will be carefully and judiciously administered; the result, not of passion, but of principle. When the chastised party can discover no injustice or partiality in what is inflicted, it is much more likely to prove salutary; an opposite conduct would only aggravate the evil, and render the object of unnecessary severity still more untoward.

To children who are placed in either of the above perilous situations, a word of advice may not be unseasonable. Let the few who come under the former description continue in patient well-doing, notwithstanding all discouragements. There have been those, who in similar circumstances, by persevering assiduities and attentions to their parents, have entirely overcome their unnatural prejudices, and have completely reinstated themselves in their fond affections. Nor let them forget, that no misconduct of their parents can absolve them from their own personal obligations: as was before observed, the fifth commandment is of universal application—it has no exceptions. In their steady obedience they have this promise for their support, that “when their father and their mother forsake them, then the Lord will take them up.” They have an Almighty parent, who is especially the guardian and protector of the destitute and oppressed. He is no respecter of persons; His mercy and His justice are equally engaged to plead their cause, and to defend their rights. He has all hearts in His hands, and is able to turn the affections of

their parents towards them, or to give them favour in the sight of others, who may amply supply their place. Common policy, indeed, would suggest that they should afford no reasonable pretence for disapprobation.

This, however, with all its disadvantages, let it be repeated, is a situation far less perilous than that of one who has the *misfortune* to be a favourite. Let those, however, who are thus distinguished, be especially solicitous to deserve it. When perched on the eminence, where by their parents' unjust partiality they are placed, let them not treat their brethren beneath with scorn or neglect, especially should their filial duty and affection keep pace with their distinguished privileges. It should never be said that those who enjoy the greatest share of their parents' love, manifest the least towards them in return. It, however, frequently happens, that children thus circumstanced become the instruments of deserved punishment to those very parents; and when the purpose is accomplished, they are broken in pieces, and thrown aside as things vile and hurtful, by a retributive Providence.

It is much to the credit of those who re-

main proof against the injurious influence of such circumstances. Prosperity is always dangerous, but especially so during the season of youth, and that species of it which is calculated to engender conceit and self-importance is of the most baneful kind. Yet a situation thus unfavourable, may afford important lessons on some future day. The result may eventually place the fallacy of human schemes and expectations in a striking point of view. Time may shew that what was designed by unjust partiality for the interest of a favourite, has become a snare and a trap, and that less indulgence, however uncongenial to present feeling, would on the whole have been more advantageous. Such children may live to see those of their brethren who were not so distinguished by parental affection, and over whom perhaps they had been suffered to rule and tyrannize, get the start of them in life; and the lot of each may be cast by an over-ruling power into a situation directly the reverse of paternal plans. Possibly the unjust course pursued, may be the very means of producing such contrary effects. The fallible children of men are disposed to call good evil, and evil

good; they pursue the one and avoid the other, in direct opposition to their own real interests. But He whose thoughts are not as our thoughts, nor His ways as our ways, often sees fit to frustrate our schemes, and make our own perverse passions instrumental to the fulfilment of his purposes. Happy are we, if after all His fatherly discipline, we discern His hand;—yea, happy are we, if we wisely observe these things : then shall we not fail to see the loving kindness of the Lord, in the midst of our bitterest disappointments.

Such sentiments (if they needed it) might find ample confirmation in the history of Jacob, who was driven from his paternal home, and became an exile in a distant land, through the partiality of his mother. There he suffered under the effects of that deceit which he had himself been taught to practise, and which, on his return, endangered the lives of his family, though perpetrated years before they were born. But the reward of such conduct has been witnessed in many a sorrowful instance since his day, and will yet be witnessed wherever it is adopted.

CHAP. IX.

SETTLING IN LIFE.

" But happy they, the happiest of their kind,
Whom gentler stars unite, and in one fate
Their hearts, their fortunes, and their beings blend."

THOMSON.

WHETHER parents have themselves been happy in the married state or not, they are equally qualified to appreciate the importance of the connexion; knowing, as they must, upon what it is that conjugal felicity depends, one should not expect them to sacrifice the happiness of their children to caprice, to fortune, or to ambition; or, last of all, to their own interests: yet that this has been done too frequently, must be in the painful recollection of many. Whether one human being (although a parent) has the future happiness of another at

such absolute disposal, is a question which neither reason nor justice would find it difficult to decide. Coercive measures, however, are more justifiable (especially towards a young lady in her teens) in *preventing* a connexion, than in forming one. The former measure may be only the suspension of happiness, the latter may prove its final termination. "Till death us do part," is a sentence which should deeply impress, and be carefully deposited in the memory of every married couple, against the time when their children may claim assistance and advice in a matter of such vast, such vital importance. How can a parent endure to hear such an irrevocable vow, forced from the lips of one of whose happiness, every natural tie, every moral and religious principle has made him the guardian! Especially, how can *she* who has spent so many happy years with the partner of her choice, the object of her tenderest affections,—how can she resign her child to one from whom her heart revolts? Or how can a mother who has been a stranger to conjugal happiness, who has dragged on so many tedious years in irksome bondage, force her

daughter into the same dreary thralldom?—Is it that the charms of gold, with the pleasures or the consequence it may have purchased for her, have so occupied every avenue of her soul as to have left no aching void—as to have proved successful substitutes for connubial felicity?—If so, her notions of genuine happiness are not very correct—not such as should place that of another at her disposal.

The following circumstance, well known to the writer, may serve to illustrate the criminality, as well as the impolicy, of forced marriages. A young lady, with the approbation of her family, had permitted her affections to be engaged by a gentleman, with whom there appeared every reason to anticipate a propitious union: when, however, he imagined himself sure of her, he manifested a peevishness of temper, and propensity to covetousness, which many take greater pains to conceal until they have secured their object. For a long time, however, her attachment remained unshaken, till at length it gave way under repeated provocations: she ceased to love one whom she could no longer esteem, and the union was given up by mutual con-

sent. In process of time she was again addressed by a gentleman, apparently more deserving: and the connexion promised the happiest results, till their felicity was interrupted by the intemperate conduct of her former lover, whose attachment was again revived from this circumstance, and which manifested itself by threatening destruction to his rival, to the object of his affections, and to himself. As he was connected in business with the young lady's father, he could not disengage himself without considerable inconvenience to the family. Under these circumstances, they resolved to sacrifice her happiness to their own interest; and while the father imprecated vengeance on her head, should she persevere in her refusal, the mother, better skilled in the arts of persuasion, besought her consent to the union on her knees!—Thus beset on every side, and with a heart torn by contending passions, she relinquished the object of her sincerest attachment, and yielded her hand to the man who, but for his own misconduct, would never have known a rival. She had the grief to see her discarded friend expire in a few months in a

state of mental derangement, the consequence of his severe disappointment.

The subsequent conduct of her husband but too well justified her apprehensions, and put her truly meek and patient temper to the severest trial. The depressing effects on her mind were such as might have been expected ; although naturally formed for domestic life, she never *shone* either as a wife or mother. Her family evidently suffered no less than herself from the consequences of this early oppression.


The deep contrition evinced by her husband in her dying moments, could neither protract her existence, nor recal his past misconduct ;—the performance of duty to *living* relatives, is of much more value than the most humiliating concessions to *dying* ones.

Whether any advantages to be derived from a forced union can sufficiently compensate for the sacrifices it demands, and the evils with which it is almost always attended, those who have tried the experiment are, perhaps, the most competent to determine.

It is true, that at this eventful period a parent's task is most difficult and anxious. The utmost wisdom and prudence, united

with the sincerest affection, sometimes prove of no avail. An appeal to reason, by a fair and candid representation of the probable consequences of a step about to be taken, may sometimes have a happy effect, especially where the character has been previously formed by judicious management. If this has not been the case, it is indeed too much to expect any great degree of pliability, or self command, in an affair in which the most powerful principles of our nature are implicated.

It sometimes happens that, notwithstanding all the prudent endeavours of a parent, the decisive step is taken, and the fate of the object of solicitude is unalterably fixed, up to the very confines of this mortal life. When this is the case, whatever previous disapprobation it may have excited, if the happiness of the child (not the authority of the parent) has been the primary object, it will still remain so. To abandon a much-loved being for one false step taken at an inexperienced age, and which may prove its own punishment, is totally unlike the conduct of the universal Parent, who, patient and long suffering, is accumulating benefits on the heads



of His children, notwithstanding all their reiterated offences.

Especially should parents endeavour, if possible, to restrain their resentment against those who have obtruded into their families; for as the "twain are now become one flesh," the displeasure manifested against one, must eventually inflict pain upon the other, besides the hazard of creating discord, and making a breach between the parties, which it may be impossible afterwards to heal.

And now we have advanced thus far on the subject, let those mothers receive a caution who have a propensity to pry into, and interfere with the domestic concerns of their married children: of their advice and assistance (the result of mature experience) all prudent children will gladly avail themselves; but they should now be allowed to stand alone, unless, indeed, when they have imprudently entered into the state at a childish age. Let them learn to manage for themselves, nor, by an intolerable officiousness make them feel that their shackles are not yet removed. An arduous task they have undertaken, like their parents before them, (it

is well if they are aware of it); but let them feel themselves *men* and *women*, and experience will probably do its work, and accomplish more than can ever be effected by a teasing and meddlesome interference. But to return from this digression.

There are other important concerns in life besides matrimonial connexions, which occasion much anxiety to the heads of families respecting the future destination of their children. Considerate parents will not place them in situations unequal to their talents, or repugnant to their tastes. Every one should be allowed the privilege of choosing that business or profession on which his future prospects depend; an opposite conduct is equally unfavourable to the character and the circumstances. For parents to *point* their children to that which is apparently the most prudent path, is their bounden duty; to force them into it, is both impolitic and cruel. It is hard that children should suffer to the very close of life (as they sometimes do) from the despotism of parents, who when sleeping in the dust cannot witness the sad effects of their own misconduct, or make reparation for the misery they have occasioned.

It is sometimes the fate of such persons to survive the objects of their tyranny. This was the case with a gentleman who had forced his only child into the navy, totally against his inclination. Some months after his departure, as the father was standing at his window, a woman solicited charity, saying, that her husband was lost at sea, by the foundering of such a ship, and that she herself had narrowly escaped the same fate. On inquiring if she knew Mr. —, and what befel him, she replied that she saw him perish! From that moment to the end of life he was in a state bordering on derangement: the whole of his time was occupied in travelling from place to place without an object, yet ever in haste. At his death a considerable portion of his property was dissipated in expensive litigation, from his alleged incompetency to execute a will; that property which would have been the undisputed inheritance of his only child, but for the criminal obstinacy of an unnatural father!

On the other hand, were young persons sufficiently impressed with the importance to future happiness of steps taken in early life,

they would cease to wonder or to be angry at the interference of their parents, who having been taught by experience to consider consequences, wish to direct those who are too apt to look no further than the present moment, and who are so readily deceived by specious appearances. It is hard when their parents have just finished their anxious and laborious task, and now look for their reward in the completion of their hopes, the final well-being of their charge, to find them all dashed in a moment by some irremediable imprudence. It is the way to cast a deepening gloom over the evening of their life, to "bring their grey hairs with sorrow to the grave." When Rebecca said, "If Jacob should take a wife of the daughters of the land, what good shall my life do me?" she spake the language of many an anxious mother in every succeeding age.

There sometimes happens (for the credit of our sex it is of rare occurrence) an instance of female degradation, for which it is difficult to account. It is when a young woman of education connects herself with a person in low life! If there be conduct which could

justify inexorable resentment in a parent, surely it is this, when, descending from the sphere in which Providence had placed her, she voluntarily plunges into vulgarity, and in so doing, sinks even beneath the level at which she aimed. Where symptoms of such depravity appear, the prospect is appalling: parents may succeed in averting immediate danger by bolts and bars; but nothing less than providential interference can afford a reasonable hope, that a mind so degraded will not eventually contrive the ruinous catastrophe.

Such disastrous connexions frequently originate in the culpable negligence of parents respecting their children's society. When this is suffered to be beneath their rank in life, uncongenial with their habits, or inconsistent with their principles, what but unhappy consequences can be expected? The following anecdote is of a kind not indeed very frequently met with, but every such occurrence should operate as a warning to parents, carefully to preserve their children from the society of their inferiors.

A young lady of fifteen, the daughter of a Baronet, was imprudently suffered by her

mother (who devoted the chief of her time to the card-table) to be on terms of familiarity with one of the upper servants of the family, who happened to be a favourite; and she occasionally accompanied this person in her visits to a relation who resided in the neighbourhood, and who was a decent tradesman. The condescension on her part, and the homage paid to her rank on theirs, kept the parties in mutual good humour, and occasioned a frequent repetition of visits: here she became acquainted with another relation of the same family, who although he was an elderly man, by no means personable, and possessed of but little property, contrived so by his art and address to ingratiate himself with this thoughtless girl, as to prevail upon her to become his wife. At that period a trip to Gretna was not necessary, as the Savoy marriages were then valid. Having thus legally secured his prize, he by a short note communicated the unwelcome intelligence to her family: the consternation and distress into which they were thrown may be easily conceived. Her brother repaired to the house, and in a paroxysm of rage drew his sword,

which he would have plunged in the bosom of his new relation, but for the interposition of the by-standers. This, however, was of no avail; the deed was done, and the inconsolable family were compelled to abandon the unfortunate victim to her fate. That a total degeneracy of character was the consequence of such a step, taken at so early an age, is not surprising. She became a widow at twenty-five; but a taste for low company, and an increasing levity of conduct, left no hopes of her ever returning to that station in society which she had voluntarily abandoned. Who can tell into what snares inexperienced youth may fall, when deserted by their natural protectors, and suffered to associate with their inferiors!

It is possible, however, to be unsuitably yoked, where there is no inequality of rank or education, or disparity of age. A variety of other circumstances might be specified, which ought to be considered as insurmountable impediments to a matrimonial union. When these are pointed out by a judicious parent, a prudent child will suffer them to have their due weight, before the affections

are too warmly engaged: when, however, the alliance is formed, and the daughter, having left her father and her mother, is become one with the object of her choice, let it be remembered that those endearing ties which connect the child and the parent, cannot be disannulled by a subsequent engagement. Although she have left her parents' dwelling, the interest they manifest in the step she has taken, plainly shews that she still retains her wonted place in their affections; they should not then be expelled from hers. She has now entered on cares and interests like their own, and (if ever before) she can no longer plead dissimilarity of circumstances as an excuse for uncongenial feelings. As the head of a family, she begins to have feelings in common with them; while every day's experience will teach her to account for many things which might once be deemed strange, or even reprehensible in their conduct. And having given them a new relation, let it especially be her endeavour to promote in her partner a filial affection for their persons, and respect for their characters. It is greatly to the credit, and much to the comfort, of all parties, when

a mutual good will exists between parents and their newly acquired sons and daughters.

It is but just to observe, that unsuitable matches are not exclusively confined to *young* people. Parents themselves sometimes forget what is due to their own characters, to the peace and welfare of their families, and shall we say to the memory of their deceased partners, in the imprudent connexions they form. For such conduct they have obviously less excuse than their inexperienced children. In a great majority of instances, it may be fairly asserted that reason and prudence would "forbid the banns." If there is a family on either side, and especially if on both, the chances for an increase of happiness are greatly against them; particularly if the most vigilant attention has not been paid to the character of the person who is introduced to such an important relation. The age should unquestionably be such as to give respectability to the union. To require that daughters should yield respectful obedience to a mother scarcely older than themselves, is expecting too much from human nature. Although no decided criminality can attach to such a step, simply

considered as giving grown-up children a young step-mother, yet it generally creates in by-standers a feeling which we should reluctantly indulge towards an esteemed friend: conduct which borders on the ridiculous, is destructive first of respect, and then of affection. A young lady thus introduced into a family, commonly brings (and perhaps innocently) a thousand evils in her train; nor must her doating and venerable partner be surprized if his children do not grant her that cordial reception, which, as the head of a family, he might deem her entitled to.

It would be doing violence to the feelings of the judicious reader, even to suppose the case of a widowed *mother* acting such a part! A *matron* uniting herself with a fit companion for her sons, is an action by which she forfeits every claim to the respect of society.

It is granted that cases may arise, where it shall not only be excuseable but *right* to enter a second time into the marriage state; and there is certainly no direct prohibition, either human or divine, to prevent it: yet is there not something which involuntarily commands our respect in the conduct of those

widows, who are "widows indeed?"—Who find in the education of their children, or in those works and labours of love, to which their disengaged circumstances particularly invite them, a sufficient object and interest for the remaining years of their pilgrimage?—But with this we have nothing to do, except as connected with the duties of parents and children. Let widows and widowers marry again and again, as often as they please, provided they do not involve their children, who have certainly a prior claim on their affections, in the too often unhappy consequences of such connexions. Let them, at least, before they once more cast the die for their own future happiness, take such precautions as shall secure their families, if possible, from the tyranny and oppression, the avarice and cruelty, to which some unfortunate orphans have been exposed by second marriages. As a pledge for her future conduct, when a woman assumes such a situation, and a grown-up daughter surrenders to her the keys which were once her mother's, and have since been her own, let her so receive them as may at once inspire some degree of confidence

and affection. If she is a woman of principle, she has nothing to do but to imagine herself in her daughter's situation for a moment, and her duty will appear plain before her.

But whatever may have been the motives of such a person, she has certainly ventured her own happiness on a very precarious foundation.—She has undertaken an unthankful office, and even by a conduct the most exemplary, will find it difficult to escape the suspicions of a censorious world. Remember then, my *young* friends, that duty to your surviving parent, demands a quiet and becoming acquiescence in the step he has taken, even though the person he has chosen may not be altogether such a one as you could have preferred. Commence the new relationship with a polite and respectful carriage towards her: and for this purpose, habituate yourselves to contemplate the bright side of her character (surely there will be some bright side to the candid eye), and then by those little assiduities and attentions which are ever endearing, aim to excite her complacency and engage her esteem. This may ripen into more tender feelings, and lay the foundation for lasting

peace and happiness in the family. Should you, after all, fail in your endeavours, you will have at least the approbation of your own consciences, as well as of Him, who while "to the froward He will shew himself froward," "to the upright will shew Himself upright," by wisely and kindly superintending all their affairs, however gloomy may be their present aspect.

CHAPTER X.

RELIGION.

"For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord." GENESIS, xviii. 19.

"*SEEK first* the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all other things shall be added to you," is both an appropriate admonition, and an encouraging promise, which may be well applied to parents who are solicitous for the prosperity of their children. The only solid foundation on which they can build a reasonable hope respecting them, is, their being brought up in "the nurture and admonition of the Lord." Yet it is to be deeply regretted that there are some christian parents, who, while they ar-

dently desire the salvation of their children, are unskilled in the means best calculated to promote it, and by their injudicious conduct rather retard than accelerate their own pious designs. Parents who attempt to tease and goad their children into religion, are not likely to convince them that “wisdom’s ways are ways of *pleasantness*, and that *all her paths are peace* :” attachment to any principles, founded on a rational assent, can never be excited by coercion.

But the most exemplary conduct, the most judicious management, sometimes prove ineffectual.—“Paul may plant, and Apollos may water, but it is God alone who can give the increase.” There are some children of many prayers, who still continue in the gall of bitterness, and strangers to the value of their souls ;—whose language to God is, “depart from us, we desire not the knowledge of thy ways :” who say of the Saviour, “we will not have this man to reign over us.” When it is even thus, the christian parent will persevere in the use of means, scattering the good seed at every convenient season, and patiently waiting to see it spring up. As a

parent he is generally favoured with many opportunities, and his zeal should not be surpassed by the people of the world, who spare no pains to give their children temporal advantages, and thereby prove that "they are sometimes wiser in the means they adopt to accomplish their purposes than the children of light."

Let not parents imagine that they are fulfilling the whole of their duty, by inculcating the bare form of religion, while negligent respecting the power; by suffering their children to grow up ignorant of the nature or source of that renovating change of heart which manifests itself in the life, and which characterises the true Christian. There are some professing families, who afford too much reason to fear that they are radically deficient in this. If so, notwithstanding all their pains, their children are as sheep without a shepherd.

There are those too, who while they profess a general belief in Christianity, and affect to conform their conduct to its precepts, go beyond a criminal negligence, and do all in their power to impede the entrance of genu-

ine religion into the minds of their children! incurring the censure of our Lord to the enemies of religion in His time, "That they would not enter the kingdom of Heaven themselves, and those who would enter they hinder." They are angry when they perceive a change at which they may have reason to rejoice; but every tree is known by its fruits: if persons who profess any change in their religious views become thenceforward more turbulent, self-willed, or unkind than formerly, there is reason indeed to suspect the genuineness of their new principles, whatever they may be; but if the reverse of this be the case, if on a cool and unprejudiced survey of their conduct it is evident that they are better children, that they are on the whole *improved* characters (perfect we cannot expect them to be), their parents have the greatest reason to rejoice at the change, however it may have been effected, and the probability is certainly in favour of the supposition that they have exchanged error for truth; for these are effects which the Gospel when rightly understood, and cordially received, never fails to

produce. But, parents, beware of mistaking a firm conscientious obedience to the commands of God, for turbulence, self-will, or unkindness towards yourselves. If your children are compelled to appeal to you as the Apostles did to their judges, and say, "Whether it be right in the sight of God, to hearken unto you rather than unto God, judge ye;" be assured that their resistance to your will in such cases is justified, and that *you*, not they, are accountable for their disobedience. But in whatever light you may regard their conduct, know assuredly that persecution *will not, cannot* attain your end. Persons can no more be forced *out* of true religion, than they can be forced *into* it. And upon the bare supposition that the work is of God, do but consider with whom you may be contending! Is it reasonable or safe to fight against Him? You may, by bolts and bars, confine your children from worshipping God in the way they have chosen, as some have done, but you cannot utterly preclude them from it. There is one whose cheering presence is with them to support and comfort, whose awful presence is with

you, to watch and restrain; to limit your power, and say "Hitherto shalt thou go, and no further."

Nor will persecution answer any desirable purpose to counteract the mere effects of delusion, the chimeras of a distempered fancy, or as you are so ready to conclude, the suggestions of vulgar enthusiasm. It is a means which ever did, and ever will defeat its own purpose: one should think that the experience of ages might by this time have banished it from human policy. Whatever there be without doors, O rear not the standard of persecution within; it is enough that *without* there are wars and fightings, but suffer not the demon of discord to gain access within your own walls. Let your resistance, should it in your conscience appear necessary, be such as may win and allure, for the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God. Deprive not your children of their natural birth-right, liberty of conscience, especially while they yield you all the obedience in other things, which the honoured relation in which you stand can claim. The religion which they profess teaches them this, but further

they dare not go. In matters of faith, if they are sincere, they appeal to higher authority. Happy is the result (and it is no uncommon one) when the mild, consistent, persevering conduct of pious children in their religious course, becomes the means of winning opposing parents; their prejudices gradually subside, "while they behold their chaste conversation coupled with fear," till at length their hearts are softened and prepared to receive the truth as it is in Jesus.

And when it has pleased Providence first to call the children "from darkness to light, let not parents proudly reject their assistance in divine things. David says, "I am grown wiser than my teachers;" and it is elsewhere said, that "out of the mouths of babes and sucklings, He has ordained strength." Those in whom divine grace is implanted, of whatever age, become themselves as "babes desiring the sincere milk of the word, that they may grow thereby." "In Christ Jesus, there is neither male nor female, bond nor free," old or young; but the inquiring mind, whatever be the external circumstances, may "ask the way to Zion" of any, whether parent or

child, who have already set their faces thitherward. Happy, thrice happy will it be for your whole household, if the time should come, "when there shall be no occasion to say—know the Lord; because you all know Him, from the least even to the greatest."

It may be easily conceived, that to children sincerely religious, one of their greatest anxieties must be the perilous situation to which mistaken notions on this subject expose their friends and relations, and that for those especially to whom they owe their being, the most affectionate solicitude will be awakened. Their solitary chambers witness many a fervent petition on their behalf. "Their heart's desire and prayer to God for them is, that they may be saved." For them you may have been laying up an ample portion of this world's good—as, in your estimation, the best inheritance. For you they covet the pearl of great price, as that which they would purchase with all their possessions. For the temporal advantages with which you have endowed them they are grateful; their religion does not teach them to undervalue these. Yet they esteem all but dross, compared with

the happiness of being found in Christ, and through him possessing eternal life. May He who governs and controls all events according to the counsel of His own will, in due time unite your hearts with theirs to fear his name.

The case which has been under consideration is not novel or rare: persecution for conscience' sake, or a house divided against itself on the score of religion, is no unusual thing. Therefore those young persons who are blest with pious parents, such as are endowed with knowledge and judgment to direct their anxious endeavours, should be exceedingly thankful for the advantages they enjoy, and anxious to improve them. Let it never be said, my young friends, not only that some of those who have been destitute of religious advantages have got the start of you, but that others who have every obstacle to encounter in their religious course, are willing to sacrifice all that the world holds dear, to obtain what you deem scarcely worth your pursuit. If some of your own age and circumstances view these subjects in a light so important, it behoves you, at least, to give them a serious

consideration : never forget, that where much is given, much is required ; and that it were better for you to have been destitute of religious advantages, than that you should have abused them. This your parents know, and all their endeavours are to prevent the sad consequences of your disobedience to the calls of the Gospel. They would pluck you, by all the means in their power, as brands from the burning, and are doing exactly what you would do by them, or by any fellow-creature the most indifferent, were you to perceive them literally in such danger. Knowing that they must shortly leave you, and go the way of all the earth, they would fain have the parting pangs mitigated by the animating prospect of their beloved children following them, “ who through faith and patience are about to inherit the promises.” They have had their share of earthly sorrows, nevertheless they have found that “ wisdom’s ways are ways of pleasantness, and that all her paths are peace.” These paths they wish, above all things, to see you tread : if you deviate from them, they know that it is at your peril ; that you are persisting in what

will eventually prove itself to be an evil and a destructive course. Perhaps even the reluctance which you evince to submit to their government, they deplore more on your account than on their own, as it manifests a spirit of rebellion against a higher power. David viewed things in this light, when under a deep sense of his sin towards a fellow-creature he exclaimed, "Against thee—thee *only* have I sinned, and done this evil." They cannot bear you to live at enmity with Him, whose wrath is so dreadful; who to His enemies is "a consuming fire; to His own people a Father of mercies—a God of consolation.

If your parents have had a religious education themselves, suffer not this circumstance (in itself so favourable) to prejudice your judgment, nor thus attempt to pervert a family blessing into a curse, as though they must necessarily have taken up their opinions as a matter of course, because they were taught them in their childhood. David says, as a confirmation of his faith, "Our fathers trusted in thee;" and *his* religion was certainly not the effect of habit and prejudice, for like

many now a-days, who can also boast of pious ancestry, he had for himself "sought out" the ways of God, and he *knew* by reflection and experience that they were "just and true."

Nor are principles to be lightly relinquished, because those who urge them may not be eminently skilled in their defence; they may be weak champions in combating the sophistry of infidelity, who yet prove that they are strong Christians by their consistent profession: like one who said, "I cannot argue for Christ, but I can die for him." They may be able to give a *good* reason of the hope that is in them, although it may not be such a one as shall satisfy a captious doubter. It is possible even that their *creed* is correct: and one that has been adopted by such a host of worthies for so many ages, must not be hastily or contemptuously discarded.

The mention of a throne of grace to irreligious persons, is, if not literally unintelligible, at least adopting a phraseology at which they scoff: yet thither the names of graceless children are often carried with "O that Ishmael might live before thee!" And thither

too in answer to their prayers, those very children are often found to repair and sue in their own persons for the mercy which once they rejected. "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power." May that propitious day be at hand, when those young readers who are yet afar off shall be brought nigh, whether they be among the lukewarm and careless, or rank with the dissipated and profane; or whether they class with those who, from a love of dissipation and worldly pleasure, endeavour to persuade themselves that they disbelieve Christianity: this is a common process, for

"Ills in the life breed errors in the brain,
And these, reciprocally, those again."

But whatever be the kind or degree of their aversion to religion, whenever they shall return and seek the God of their fathers, they will find him compassionate and full of mercy. Even now, while they are afar off, he is ready to meet them with a full pardon and a free welcome. "Good and upright is the Lord, therefore will He teach *sinner*s in the way."

But let us reverse the picture. There are

many who, notwithstanding every obstacle, every hindrance from within and from without, resolutely maintain their religious course, even while their parents remain enemies to God. (They would probably feel indignant at being so designated; but "he that is not *for* Him is against Him." The worldly mind is enmity to God, whatever specious appearance it may assume.) But should you, my young friend, be the child of such parents, suffer not spiritual pride to alloy the purity of that religion which you are solicitous to recommend, the chief character of which is to be meek and lowly: for "who made you to differ?" "or what have you that you have not received?" The cause you would support may sustain the greatest injury, by your assuming that superiority over your parents which genuine religion will not sanction. If you are a real disciple of Jesus, you will aim to be like Him; nor will you adopt that carriage towards your fellow-creatures, much less towards those whom His providence has set over you, which he never displayed even when surrounded by persecutors, and although He was Lord of all.

You are, indeed, placed in delicate circumstances, which require that "the wisdom of the serpent should be blended with the harmlessness of the dove:" for if the constancy you evince in maintaining your liberty of conscience is liable to misconstruction, probably much more liable would be any attempts on your part to enlighten the minds of your parents; such endeavours should be made with the utmost circumspection, delicacy, and address; and perhaps after all, the most effectual method that can be adopted in such a case, is the cultivation of those christian graces which adorn the doctrine you profess: these will more effectually recommend it than all *you* can urge in its behalf. Let your religion reflect such a radiant lustre all around, that not only your parents, but all within your sphere, "may see your good works, and so learn to glorify your Father which is in heaven."

CHAP. XI.

THE DEATH OF PARENTS.

"And when Jacob had made an end of commanding his sons, he gathered up his feet into the bed, and yielded up the ghost, and was gathered unto his people.

GENESIS, xlix. 33.

"And Joseph fell upon his Father's face, and wept upon him, and kissed him."

GENESIS, L. 1.

EVERY fresh stage in the life of man is important, especially as he is connected with others by natural ties; and with parents, each increases in interest as their families advance towards maturity. When they have disposed of them in life, when they have dandled their children's children on their knees, then another interesting event—the most interesting of all awaits them. Having set their house in or-

der, they must prepare to depart, and take up their abode in *that house* which is appointed for all living, where the busy scenes of life are over, and where, whatever once employed their most strenuous exertions in this busy world, concerns them no longer. As when we entered it we brought nothing with us, so it is certain when we quit it we can carry nothing away; and this consideration should have due weight with those who possess property to leave behind them, that their successors may have no just occasion for complaint, nor be involved in domestic disputes by an unfair distribution of it. That the death of parents should be the signal for bitter animosities and contentions among surviving children, is truly unnatural and indecent. Carry not your resentment, my dear reader, against any individual of your family to the borders of the grave—the confines of an eternal world, forgetting that beyond it is the bar of final equity. This would be to make the last act of your life an act of sin, and perhaps to entail miseries on your family, when redressing them will be for ever out of your power. Neither by weak superstition, nor

criminal procrastination, suffer your property to pass into hands for which you never designed it. *Set thine house in order*—leave it not in confusion if you would be remembered with respect by your survivors. It is “the memory of the *just* only that is blessed.”

To have the loins girded and the lamp burning ready to depart, is the grand aim of every true Christian ;—happy those, who when their Lord cometh He shall find so prepared. To behold a venerable saint, who has “accomplished as an hireling his day” on the confines of both worlds, is the most interesting and instructive scene that our eyes can behold. Let imagination pourtray a weeping family surrounding the bed of a departing christian mother :—by every tender office that affection can devise, they endeavour to mitigate the pangs of expiring nature,—she still views them with maternal feelings, elevated by the glowing sentiments of a happy spirit on the confines of immortality—she gazes till their still-loved forms become indistinct—they recede from her view—celestial objects steal on her sight—she closes her eyes on mortal things—she wings her way to regions un-

known, and her weeping family quit the silent chamber.

Are there any among the mourning groupe who have never suffered their imaginations to realize such an event?—They have been aware, indeed, that “it is appointed for all men once to die,” and have known that their parents, in common with all the human race, must one day take their departure; so that “the place that once knew them, shall know them no more for ever:” but such vague ideas afford no accurate conception of the reality. Now they behold that countenance, which once exhibited expressions of tender affection, of anxious solicitude, perhaps sometimes of disapprobation or of grief, unmeaning and inanimate, whether it be gazed upon by children once dutiful or undutiful—by friends or by foes.

“ This languishing head is at rest,
Its thinking and aching are o’er ;
This quiet immoveable breast
Is heaved by affliction no more.
This heart is no longer the seat
Of trouble, and torturing pain ;
It ceases to flutter and beat ;
It never shall flutter again.”

A few more gloomy days, and the sad remains will be deposited in their "long home," and the survivors will be left to their reflections. Many there are who in such circumstances will experience a sweet mitigation of their sorrows, in the recollection of their past conduct; and some there may be, to whom the retrospect can afford little satisfaction. Is there a reader who has been remiss in attention to a drooping parent, whose heartless services must have been well understood, and keenly felt by her who was so well skilled in the offices of kindness? Every apartment of the house, almost every common circumstance of the day, may bring to the recollection scenes which would gladly be recalled, or forgotten. "It was in this room," may such a one say, "that I so grieved her spirit by my pert or rebellious carriage.—In that chair she sat, when I refused to comply with such her request—I do not *now* think it was unreasonable. It was there that I witnessed her feeble air and languid look, when, instead of offering my services, I turned away in quest of my own pleasures. This, and this, and this, are tokens of love I received from her on various occasions—Oh I

shall value them more than ever now ! It is just so long since she complied with my wishes, evidently for peace, sake. This is the room in which she watched over my bed during my tedious sickness : methinks I see her anxious looks, her unremitting care, as though she was guarding the choicest treasure. Unhappy me ! My grief admits of no cure—I will follow my injured mother in sorrow to the grave.—But stay—I will go to my afflicted father, and pour the balm of filial consolation into his bereaved bosom. Departed saint !—If you can look down on mortals once dear to you, behold your repenting child, rendering that tribute of duty to your torn and lonely partner which was once your due.—Yes, if aught in this lower world can assuage his bleeding wounds and mitigate his woes, the task shall be mine to administer that consolation.—If aught can mitigate or assuage my own, it must be the tender offices of filial love, which I will ever render him till he joins your happy spirit in the mansions above."

We would hope there are few comparatively to whom the former part of this soliloquy would be at all applicable ; but there

are none, having a surviving parent duly sensible of his loss who may not adopt the latter. Their utmost assiduities, although unable to heal such a wound, may do much towards mitigating the smart. To whom can parents look for comfort when thus bereaved, with such reasonable expectation as to their own offspring? On whom have they such imperious claims? If children did but consult their own interests, they would by their attentive and affectionate conduct often prevent the necessity for second marriages, and parents would not be forced to solicit happiness from strangers, because it cannot be found in the bosom of their own families!

CHAP. XII.

TO CHILDLESS PERSONS.

“What wilt thou give me, seeing I go childless.”

GENESIS, xv. 2.

ALTHOUGH the preceding pages have been exclusively addressed to *parents and children*, a few words to those who stand in neither of those relations, it is hoped will not be deemed so unpardonable a digression, as to be altogether unacceptable.

There are those who have had years of married life embittered, because it has pleased Providence to withhold from them a family, and who, while they hear others complain of the various trials to which they are thereby exposed, are ready to think that such troubles are not to be compared with their own, “so foolish are we, and ignorant!” So apt to forget that

"the heart knoweth its own bitterness." The hackneyed methods of consolation have probably hitherto been tried in vain; in vain they hear, that the ill-inclined and vicious, the amiable and deserving, severally excite in the bosoms of parents the deepest sorrow, although on very opposite accounts: the misconduct of the former, the misfortunes of the latter, each rending their hearts and banishing their repose. They hear, that in all their afflictions we are afflicted, and that our anxieties multiply with our children. Let childless persons who repine at their lot, read the heart-rending lamentation of David over a rebellious Absalom, or hear him in bitter anguish supplicating for the life of a dying infant! Let them attend to the pathetic story of Rispah, the daughter of Aiah, who watched night and day the corpses of her slain family, and they will no longer attempt to say that "there is no sorrow like unto their sorrow;" especially if they recollect that to these, or woes equally bitter, every parent is liable. But this is not a view of the subject calculated to afford solid consolation: that can be derived only from an humble submission to

the all-wise disposer of events, who both gives and withholds, in subservience to the best interests of his people. The time is at hand when those who have wives, and husbands, and children, shall be as though they had them not; and then, although you may not *literally* be entitled to say, "here am I, and the children thou hast given me." You may, nevertheless, bring up a long train to join in the triumph of that day, who may own you as their spiritual parents, as the honoured instruments of their new birth unto God. In such an animating prospect Paul gloried, although he had probably neither sons nor daughters, according to the flesh; and well he might, and well may every zealous promoter of the Gospel of Christ rejoice, for "whoever converts a sinner from the error of his ways, shall shine as the stars in the firmament for ever and ever."

Remember then, my dear reader, that although Providence has withheld from you the pleasures and the cares of a family, as a Christian you may have other pleasures, and should have other cares; your responsibility, although altered in its character, is not di

minished. Should you see the work of the Lord prosper in your hands, happy are you. It is evidently His pleasure, that the talents with which you are intrusted should be directed into a foreign channel. It will be well if you are enabled to co-operate with his wise designs. "He will give you a name better than that of sons and of daughters."

The same all-wise disposer has seen fit to "take away from others the desire of their eyes with a stroke;" to level all their pleasing anticipations with the dust! ere the tender bud had unfolded—or just as it had begun to disclose its varied tints—or when a full-blown flower, the pride of the parterre, and distinguished among the neighbouring plants for fragrance and beauty! To hearts thus lacerated and still bleeding, what healing balm can be applied? what cordial administered, sufficient to revive the drooping spirits? Will it suffice to tell the disconsolate mourners (as some officiously do) that all their grief is unavailing, as it cannot bring back the object of it? This were to mock their woes, and to affront their understandings. Nor is it less vain to form a thousand chimerical

suppositions of what calamities *might* have befallen the deceased, had their lives been prolonged, or what unfavourable characters they *might* have proved, since it is clear that none of these things were ever designed, any more than that they might have proved comforts to their parents and ornaments to society;—suppositions which would be quite as rational, and much more charitable. But to those who have no better consolations to offer, it may justly be said, “miserable comforters are ye all.” Such antidotes for grief are often tried, but never succeed. A bleeding heart is not to be so healed; and he who alone can do it effectually, might say to those who attempt it, “Ye have healed the hurt of the daughter of my people slightly.” It is he alone who can administer true consolation to the afflicted, whether he denies children, or takes them away, or chastises us in or through them. His divine supports under painful dispensations “calm the surges of the mind,” and afford consolation of the most effectual kind. The assurance “that all things shall work together for good,” and that “these light afflictions, which are but

for a moment, work out a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory," ever retain their value, however common and familiar they may be to the ear. They are calculated to produce a cheerful acquiescence in the divine will; not, indeed, if such passages are read carelessly and without reflection: it is only when we pause, and endeavour to receive their full meaning, that their efficacy is felt.

But although with what children *might* have been, a bereaved parent has nothing to do, yet abundant consolation may be derived in many cases from the contemplation of what they now *are*. Happy spirits!—removed from the parental embrace to repose on the bosom of Jesus, where they can never be assailed by sickness or sorrow, and where they cannot die any more.

The writer will here take the liberty to recommend a little volume, entitled, "The Mourner," by Dr. Grosvenor, admirably adapted to such occasions. May the bereaved and broken-hearted, and disappointed, experience the truth of that promise which says, "Though He hath torn, He will also heal!"

CHAP. XIII.

THE ORPHAN.

"When my father and my mother forsake me, then
the Lord will take me up. PSALM, xxvii. 10.

YOUNG persons, living in ease and affluence in their father's house, do not always calculate for the future; but are disposed to think that "to-morrow shall be as this day, and much more abundant." It has, perhaps, never occurred to some, by what a precarious tenure they hold their present enjoyments; that they may be essentially curtailed, if not totally annihilated by the death of their parents; that on the fleeting breath in their nostrils, depend those appearances on which they so greatly value themselves; that by this alone their gay families may be preserved from a state of poverty or dependance. But even

where this is not the case, such a mournful event generally throws the younger branches of a family in a greater or a less degree on the care and benevolence of others. A more habitual sense of our precarious enjoyment of earthly friends would produce very salutary effects on the conduct and character of young persons, who, satisfied with present competence and security, have not learned to calculate on a sudden reverse of circumstances when they may be obliged for advice and protection, perhaps even support, to those whom they now view with indifference, if not disdain; or when they may meet with disinterested and needful friendship, from quarters where their present conduct cannot at all entitle them to expect it. Common policy (not to mention higher principles) would suggest these sentiments, as we cannot tell whose services we may need. It is "the prudent who foresee the evil, while the simple pass on and are punished."

The vicissitudes of human life are such, that it is wise to be prepared for all changes; and the young, while secure and happy beneath the parental roof, should be careful by

an amiable and conciliating conduct to engage the good will and esteem of all around : that is a prudent resolution, which the young reader has perhaps been taught to adopt.

“ Though I’m now in younger days,
Nor can tell what shall befall me,
I’ll prepare for every place
Where my growing age shall call me.”

The death of parents is certainly the severest calamity with which either infancy, or childhood, or youth, can be visited : having no claim on new guardians or protectors equal to that of natural affection, the orphan who has found such protectors should not be wanting in a grateful sense and expression of the obligation ; especially should a sentiment of fervent gratitude be kindled towards that Being, who, having the hearts of all at His disposal, raises up friends for the destitute, and “ setteth the solitary in families.” But should He in His wisdom have seen fit to withhold for the present all human aid, and seemed to have cast them on the mercy of a cold world, “ His tender mercies are over *all* His works,” and the *orphan* is the object of

His peculiar regard. He is so eminently the father of the fatherless, that there have been none, however circumstanced, who might not eventually have reared their Ebenezer, saying, "Hitherto the Lord hath helped me." Should you, at present, appear to be cast on the wide world with none but God for your friend, what need you more? It was not a destitute orphan, but the king of Israel who exclaimed, "Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none on earth that I desire beside thee." He knew he depended upon God as much for protection and support as one of the meanest of his subjects. And you, with equal confidence, may lay claim to the same fatherly care.

But whatever be our situation, however great our faith, and sincere our dependance, we must still expect our share of earthly sorrows; they will assuredly assail us, however we may be supported under them, or eventually delivered from them:—especially the true Christian must expect them, for whom the Lord loveth, He chasteneth. The orphan has peculiar promises, but they are not such as can assure him of health, or riches, or

favour with the world. But while he humbly depends upon the assurance, his bread *will* be given, and his water *will* be sure. "I have not seen the righteous forsaken." "Seek not" then, my young friend, "great things for yourself" in this world, but set your affections on higher objects—on things above; and then you will know both how to want and how to abound, and "in whatever state you are therewith to be content."

If there is reason to hope that your departed parents had thus been "made wise to salvation," let it quicken you to "be followers of them, who through faith and patience inherit the promises." A few more revolving seasons, and you also must quit this busy scene, with all its anxieties and sorrows. Your bones may be deposited beside them, but they will there bid you no welcome—the knees on which you were once dandled, the arms which once encircled you, are motionless in death—the eyes which gazed on you with delight, are for ever closed—the hand which administered to your wants, has "forgot its cunning." It is in the mansions above that you will unite again, with all your powers

and faculties infinitely improved ; your painful wanderings through this troublesome world will then be forgotten, or only remembered with gratitude to your great deliverer. There will be no more trying vicissitudes or painful separations, but faithful parents and dutiful children will unite in ceaseless praises to the universal Parent. Let the afflicted in all circumstances " comfort one another with these words."

CONCLUSION.

" Our babes shall richest comforts bring ;
If tutor'd right, they'll prove a spring
 Whence pleasures ever rise :
We'll form their minds with studious care
To all that's manly, good, and fair,
 And train them for the skies.

While they our wisest hours engage,
They'll joy our youth, support our age,
 And crown our hoary hairs :
They'll grow in virtue every day,
And thus our fondest loves repay,
 And recompense our cares."

COTTON.

It has been attempted in the preceding pages to suggest some hints for the promotion of domestic happiness ; those which remain shall be occupied in pointing out that upon which alone any reasonable hope of success can be founded—namely, *early discipline*.

Parents and children naturally expect to derive mutual comfort from those intimate relations; but wishes and expectations are fruitless without corresponding exertions, and even exertions may prove ineffectual if delayed beyond their proper season. Were parents sufficiently convinced of this, what happy effects would result to society in general, as well as to their own immediate circle! It is in the *nursery* that their operations must first commence, if they would look forward to distant years, with any reasonable hope of deriving comfort from the society of their grown-up children.

It may be objected that many bright examples might be produced, to prove that excellence of character does not always depend on early education; and on the contrary, that some undutiful, and even profligate children have been in these respects highly favoured: but such instances are only exceptions; without which there is no general rule; and such exceptions (those especially of the latter class) are very rare. Let the assertion then sink deep into the heart of every parent. *The foundation stone of public*

and private felicity should be laid in the nursery, not by the mercenary services of ignorant domestics, but by the skilful hand of the intelligent christian *mother*. In that insignificant chamber, bestrewed with fragments of toys and glittering baubles, the scene of frolic and gambol, resounding with the tones of infantile mirth and woe,—the future happiness or misery of the fire-side below is (if we may be allowed the expression) manufactured, which may spread from thence far and wide. It is here that filial respect, filial affection, with all their accompanying virtues, although small at first as a grain of mustard-seed, begin to spring: the twigs shoot forth, the blossoms appear, delicious fruits ripen on the boughs, and, harbouring every tuneful songster, from thence shall issue many a melodious strain. It is here that humility and self-denial first break the stubborn soil, and expand their tender foliage like the snow-drop and violet, those welcome flowers of spring. Here with needful culture, prudence, and discretion, and benevolence display the promising bud, while the assiduous and skilful hand will clear from the ground every

noxious weed which would retard or destroy their growth. And here especially, as the grand source of all, should be first sown the good seed of the word, which if dressed and watered by the prayers and tears of a pious parent, may even here spring up and bear its early fruit. On this interesting spot are often planted the thorns which protrude from a parent's dying pillow, or the sweet flowerets which bestrew it.

What a comprehensive term is domestic happiness! It includes the important present—it involves the future to an indefinite extent: to generations yet unborn its benign influence extends, beyond the reach of calculation.

“ If solid happiness we prize,
Within our breast this jewel lies;
And they are fools who roam:
The world has nothing to bestow;
From our own selves our joys must flow,
And that dear hut our *home*.”

If it would not warrant the philanthropist to devote the best of *his* time, *his* talents, *his* exertions to the grand object within the limits of his own walls, it might justify *her*

in so doing whose peculiar province it is. While other things are not neglected, let *home* duties be the primary concern with her. Could the writer of these humble pages have as many years added to her life as she has already counted, this important subject, whenever she ventured to address her sex, would still constitute the essence of her counsel.

Let not the above sentiments, however, be supposed to intimate that the prior duties of the wife and mother are to seclude her entirely from all intercourse with the world, or exclude those of a more diffusive benevolence. On the latter subject there are two opposite errors, against which the mistresses of families should carefully guard. While some from a love of going abroad, of public assemblies, of bustle, of any thing but staying at home (and it is hoped from some mixture of better motives), are ever to be seen on all those occasions, which the present state of the religious world renders so frequent; others from the pressure of private cares and family duties, would excuse themselves not only from personal activity, but from taking any interest in the good works that are going

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on around them. But let such remember, that he who said to David, concerning his zeal for the Lord's house, "Thou didst well in that it was in thine heart," can, and does distinguish between indifference to His service, and inability to engage in it. In the primitive times of Christianity, those women only were accounted worthy of regard who, besides "guiding the house and bringing up children," had also "lodged strangers and washed the saints' feet," and who "were well reported of for good works." There are, perhaps, some good housewives now-a-days, who would have been inclined to take Martha's part, and to condemn Mary for her neglect of household affairs; but Martha was not reprov'd for providing a hospitable meal for her Lord, but for being engrossed about the non-essentials of it. And it is only those who, like her, are cumbered with their private concerns,—or, in other words, cumbered with worldliness of mind, who cannot find time even to wish and pray for the success of the benevolent exertions of others.

An instance just now occurs to our recollection (doubtless by no means a singular one) of a pious woman, who besides the charge of a

large young family, was an active assistant to her husband in a flourishing trade. If any circumstances could warrant inattention to *out-door* duties, they are such as these; but she did not avail herself of these excuses. While she was an affectionate mother, and governed her children and her servants with discretion; while she was diligent in business, and attentive to her customers, she always manifested a lively interest in the labours of love that were carried on in the Christian society to which she belonged. She could not herself do much, but what she *could*, she did. She encouraged others who were more at leisure than herself. She was willing to contribute of her substance to the good cause. She found time occasionally to visit her poor and sick neighbours, proving the truth of the vulgar adage, that, "where there is a will there is a way." Nor will this be thought wonderful when it is added, that the time which many persons in her condition spend in frivolous pursuits, was saved by her for better purposes. She dressed herself and her children in a manner becoming her station, and therefore she had both the time and the money which others so vainly squander to spare for

the cause of God and her neighbour. The reader will excuse this digression.

To return to the subject:—whether we take a general view of human nature as it appears abroad in the world, or a more intimate survey of it from the knowledge of ourselves, and of those immediately within our sphere, it might be expected to operate as a forcible lesson on all to whom Providence has intrusted the culture of the rising generation. Can parents look around them, and take no alarm at the follies and vices which they behold on every side? Do they imagine the moral habits in which their children are nurtured, must of course secure them from the contagion? Can they be supine and indifferent amid the evils they are every hour compelled to witness, and by which their own happiness is so frequently disturbed? Whence originally proceed those crosses and vexations, those goads in our sides which occasion such frequent complaints of this troublesome world? Not from the *immediate* hand of Providence, which does not shower down even upon guilty creatures an uninterrupted storm; but would permit them to enjoy many a serene, if not a cloudless day. No, they are woes

which we inflict upon each other. It is true we are thus made instruments in His hand, by which He frequently chastises us; yet He authorises—nay, He *commands* us to use all our endeavours by education, to convert these swords into ploughshares, these spears into pruning-hooks; to render what is hostile and dangerous, useful and beneficial; and this will assuredly be required at our hands.

It were vain to attempt to enforce such sentiments on self-approving Pharisees, by the contemplation of their own depraved propensities: their ostentatious boasts, that “they are not as other men,” drive us to make our appeal to the experienced Christian. Those who feel and bewail the disorder within their own bosoms, can make a salutary application of the principle in the case of their offspring. They see their work before them at greater certainty, and they apply themselves to it with unremitting energy and zeal. They apply *themselves* to it, so far as their talents and opportunities permit them: the want of these, in many instances, demands a substitute for parental exertions. Yet surely the christian mother will be solicitous, at least, to superintend the moral culture of her charge during the first

years of life. The general admonition, "to look well to our flocks and our herds," she applies to the care of those tender lambs which are exposed during infancy to innumerable perils, from which few hands but those of a mother can defend them. She is solicitous, at least, to lay the foundation of a structure which shall be proof against the boisterous winds, the beating rain, and the swelling flood: having so done, there is less danger in committing the *external* decorations of the building to other hands. But those who neglect to do this, or attempt it too late, or perform it unskilfully, or trust too implicitly to the services of others, must not complain of their hard lot, as though some strange thing had befallen them, when they reap the inevitable consequences. It would be much more strange were not their natural effects to follow such causes.

At the conduct of the world in these respects we cannot wonder; but what shall we say to those who, making higher pretensions than a common profession of christianity; those who afford us some reason to hope that they have indeed embraced the Gospel of Christ, and know something of its power, as

well as of its doctrines; yet so grievously fall short of the spirit of it in the management of their offspring? The head of a family assembles his household together for worship—he opens the sacred volume, and reads the history of Eli, and of Eli's family: he closes the book, and like a man beholding his natural face in a glass, and afterwards forgetting what manner of person he is, goes his way without making any salutary application of it: although, alas! it is more than the united efforts of the mother and the servants have been able to effect, to restrain his boisterous children, or to maintain a decent silence during the short interval of religious worship!

Be it the ambition then of every true Christian to make his house a seminary, in which citizens are educated for the present world; a temple, in which they are early dedicated to, and prepared for the world to come.

THE END.

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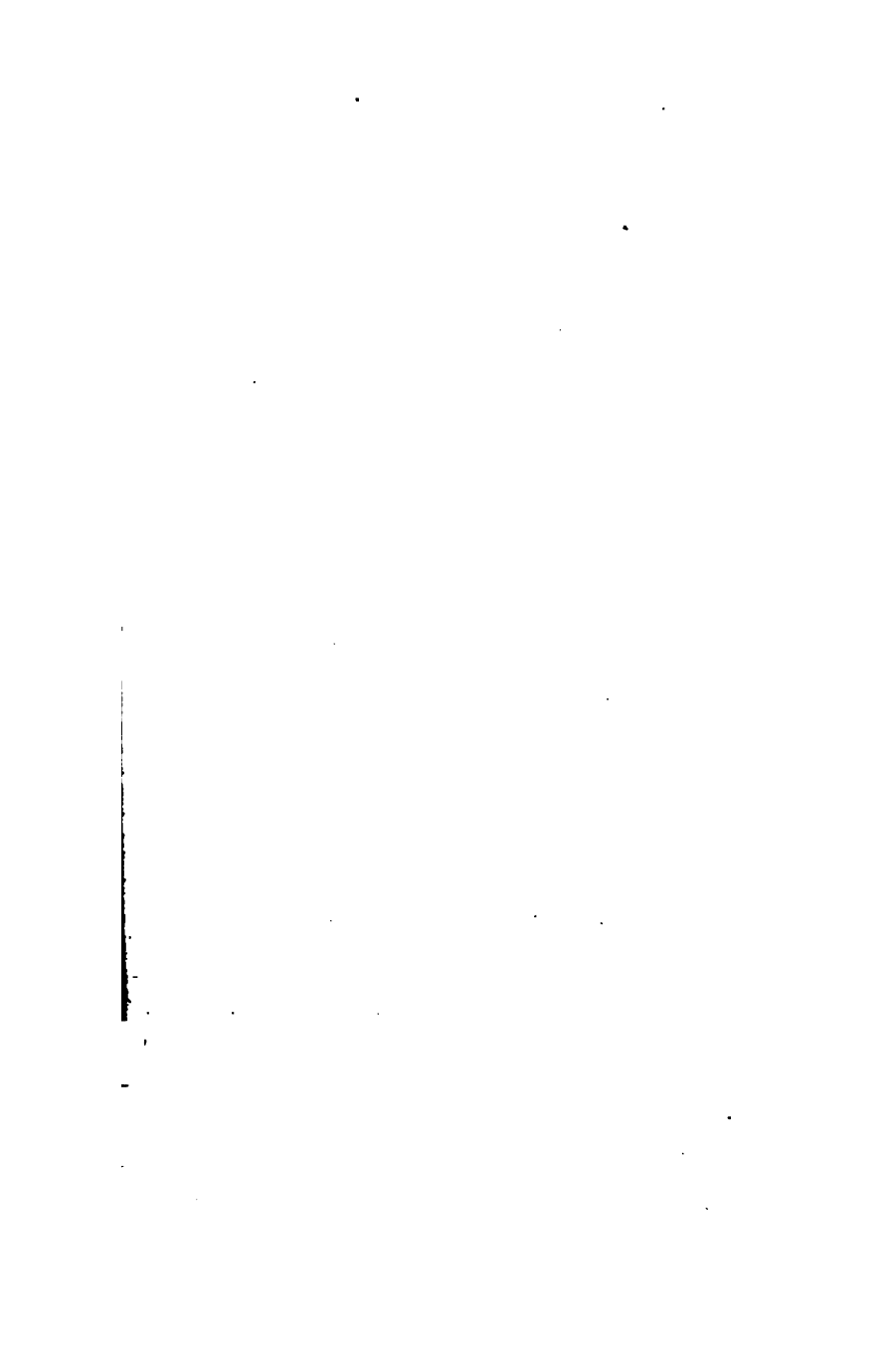
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